

ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL

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Journal of the Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR

BENJAMIN BRITTEN'S WAR REQUIEM

B. Ilyish

THE PERFORMANCE of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* on December 25 and January 4 was a major event in the musical life of Leningrad. Our music lovers are now well acquainted with many of Britten's works, such as his *Serenade*, his *Symphony for Cello and Orchestra*, his *Cello Sonata*, and four of his operas (*Albert Herring*, *The Rape of Lucrece* and *The Turn of the Screw* were performed here by the English Opera Group last September, and *Peter Grimes* was given a concert performance last spring). However, the *War Requiem* showed the composer in a completely new light.

Coming as it does after a number of other *Requiems* (Mozart's, Verdi's, Berlioz's) it strikes the hearer by its complete originality of conception. The idea of combining the traditional medieval Latin text of the *Requiem* with poems by Wilfrid Owen written in the trenches of World War I has certainly been a very bold one. The Latin text is, as it were, interpreted by Owen's poems and appears to have a most immediate connection with the horror of the war and the composer's passionate protest against it. The effect is overwhelming indeed.

As for the music, what is perhaps most striking is that in spite of the huge orchestra and the two choirs, creating an amazing mass of sound, the hearer never for a moment feels crushed by it. There is a kind of transparent quality about it: horror is presented without prejudice to harmony and beauty—a principle which Mozart advocated. Having gathered this impression on the first hearing, I carefully checked it during the second performance and found it fully confirmed.

There are very many unforgettable details, such as some sudden flashes of a solo trumpet, sudden bells at the opening of *Sanctus*, isolated chords played by two or three solo strings, emerging and disappearing again. There are very fine short passages for oboe, and for solo violin, and very many other fine features. One of the most memorable effects is the prolonged impression of complete silence in *Libera me*.

The hall was crowded, of course. In the street outside the Philharmonic building people would ask you if you had a spare ticket, and would stay on hoping for better luck.

The *Requiem* was performed by the student orchestra of the Leningrad Conservatoire, by the student choir of the Conservatoire, and by a children's choir. The young singers and musicians did their best to ensure the success of the great work. Leningrad concert-goers hope they may be able to hear Britten's *War Requiem* once again.

THE BOLSHOI BALLET

Pyotr Abolimov

The author is deputy director of the Bolshoi Theatre in charge of its productions in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses, and is leading its ballet company during their tour this summer in Great Britain. As the author of ballet librettos, Mr. Abolimov has also participated in the creative side of ballet. This article he wrote especially for the 'Anglo-Soviet Journal' as a contribution to an exchange of ideas with ballet-lovers on the nature and direction of ballet as an art.

THE BRITISH tour of the ballet company of the Bolshoi Theatre began on July 12 at the Royal Festival Hall, where they are performing for six weeks. During this time our young stars Timofeeva, Kondratieva, Maximova, Bessmertnova, Sorokina, Fadechev, Liepa, Vasiliev and Mikhail Lavrovsky, and such representatives of the middle generation of our theatre as Karelskaya, Yahudin and Sekh, will present three programmes drawn from one-act ballets, miniatures and *grandes divertissements*.

There will also be an opportunity for ballet lovers not only to see our ballet but to take part in friendly discussion of the paths of development of this genre of art.

But what is the ballet of the Bolshoi Theatre?

To begin with, it is an organic part of the Theatre as a whole, inseparably linked with its history and its contemporary life. The company of the modern Bolshoi Theatre consists of 2,800 persons: artists of the opera, ballet, orchestra, chorus and the mime group; students; scene painters, costumiers and make-up artists; and production staff. There are two big stages, on each of which there is a production almost every evening, and there are two auditoria, which hold 8,200 persons nightly, and on Sundays when there are matinees as well 16,400. Both houses are always full.

The Bolshoi Theatre also has six rehearsal halls for opera and ballet, with a floor area of more than 20,000 square feet. It has twenty teachers of singing, production and dance, working daily with the creative members of the theatre.

On its two stages the Bolshoi Theatre presents an extensive repertoire of opera and ballet: Russian and European classics and modern Soviet works. Of its twenty-six ballets, for example, fifteen are by Soviet authors.

The Bolshoi Ballet is a constituent, and very important, part of the organism of the Bolshoi Theatre, sharing the common artistic life and régime of the Theatre, and contributing much to it.

Whereas the first decades of the history of the Bolshoi Ballet were taken up with enriching the dry classical primer of the French school of ballet with an emotionalism drawn from the Russian's age-old love of folk song and folk dance, its subsequent years were ones of affirmation of dramatisation, content and imagery in ballet; of subordination of virtuoso dance technique to revelation of the image of man with his rich world of thought and emotion; and of the utilisation of ballet technology as a means and not an end. That is how the reform brought about in ballet music by Chaikovsky was profoundly interpreted by the Bolshoi Ballet. Chaikovsky converted ballet music from an accompaniment to dance numbers into the determining component of the production. Having made it symphonic, and subordinated it to the task of the combined musical and dramatic action, he presented choreographers and artists not only of his own time but since, with new artistic and technical demands, to which the Bolshoi Ballet nobly responded with the creation of an immortal *Swan Lake*

and the emergence of a new quality in performance—a genuine dramatic image that raised choreographic technique and standards of production.

The theatre has carefully preserved the immortal classical images of music and choreography: Chaikovsky's *Swan Lake* and Adam's *Giselle*. During the forty-seven years of Soviet power the Bolshoi Ballet has revived seventeen ballets to the music of Russian and European classics, and produced thirty-seven by Soviet composers (from the world-famous masters Shostakovich and Khachaturian down to the quite young Shchedrin and Karetnikov). It ceaselessly searches for new modern themes and images from the history of its own and other nations, creates productions on original subjects, and turns to themes and subjects from the classics of world literature: Pushkin, Shakespeare, Lope de Vega, Bazhov.

The work of the Bolshoi Ballet in itself gives a partial answer to the question of what is the line of development of ballet. What is its vital, artistic direction? Is ballet a dramatic production? Or is it without subject? Is ballet a pattern?

During the birth of classical ballet, during its court life, invention underlay all ballet presentations, so the majority of the characters of the old ballets were very far from a real penetration into the essence of man and his real life. The entry of man into ballet, with his rich inner world, his thoughts, emotions, and deeds, and the entry of great dramaturgy, living, and exciting by the truthfulness of its conflicts, enriched ballet and determined its development along the line of real theatrical art. The further progressive movement of Soviet ballet took the same direction and no other: the disclosure by choreographic means of the most complex thing in the world—the spiritual face of man, of the hero of the past and of our own day.

Soviet ballet rejects the line of least resistance in choreography, the allegedly complex but in essence primitive line of abstracting the genre, of converting the dancer, gifted with the highest means of artistic expression, plastic and musical, into a soulless pawn, a plastic marionette that moves on the boards of the stage, however talented the choreographer, like a beautiful exterior without form or content.

If choreographers and ballet producers are only interested artistically in searching for dance combinations they will inevitably lose man, with his spiritual variety, in this search, and lose the image. Instead, a schemata or pattern will rule the stage—a schemata without feelings, ideas and emotional being.

This does not mean that Soviet ballet is against dances without subject. There can, and must, be ballet-miniatures that have no subject, no dramatic structure, no development of images, but only good choreography born of good music.

But we are not arguing about miniatures, but about a trend in *ballet theatre*. The ballet theatre without man is a void, a perversion, a contradiction of the very nature of the theatre as a genre. No schematic, plastic combination, not even the very best, can replace emotional, graphic expression of the spiritual experience of man. The plastic must be inspired by thought and human feeling. And it would seem, judging by the immense interest in Soviet ballet and its 'discovery' as an artistic phenomenon by thousands of spectators during the foreign tours of the Bolshoi Ballet in recent years, and by the schools of disciples that have been born following these tours, that the most precious thing in the art of ballet is not what pleases the eye but what stirs the mind and moves the heart, what transforms the audience from cold, often indifferent, onlookers of the events taking place on the stage into excited participants in them.

The artistic trend and activity of the Bolshoi Ballet, and the company itself, are determined in the main by the variety of styles and choreographic 'hands' of its choreographers: the strict classicism of Petipa and Gorsky in *Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake*; the innovation of the male dancing in Vainonen's *The*

Flames of Paris; the dramatisation of the ballet and the noble emotional structure of Lavrovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*; the laconicism of Grigorovich in *The Stone Flower* and *A Legend of Love*; the sculptural quality of Jacobson's *Spartacus*; Goloizovsky's plastic weaving in *Leila and Medzhnun* and *The Polovtsian Dances*; the penetration and wit of Kasatkina and Vasiliev in *Vanin Vanina* and *The Geologists*, and of Tarasova and Lapauri in *Lieutenant Kizhe*.

This list is far from exhaustive; but one thing unites all the choreographers—the creation of plays according to the laws of theatrical dramaturgy and not of diverting spectacles, of plays necessarily filled with meaning, creations with profound dramatic images conveying the idea of the play, and with a never-ceasing search for new means of artistic expression.

The Bolshoi Theatre also has its conductors—Fayer, Rozhdestvensky, Zhiuraitis, Kopylov—and its fine orchestra, whose musicianship contributes much to the creation of ballets as single musical and choreographic entities.

The Bolshoi Ballet is a troupe of 230 persons. It includes Maya Plisetskaya, Raisa Struchkova, Nina Timofeeva, Marina Kondratieva, Ekaterina Maximova, Natalya Bessmertnova, Nina Sorokhina, Rimma Karelskaya, Nikolai Fadeechev, Maris Liepa, Vladimir Vasiliev, Mikhail Lavrovsky, Shamil Yahudin and Yaroslav Sekh—its stars of the first magnitude, the concentrated expression of the essence of Soviet ballet, of its broadest circle of ideas and thoughts, of inspired glorification of man and humanity in art, and of artistic dedication and inspiration. It is the most finished dancing technique and ideal form, dedicated always, and above all, to the creation of images in plays. It is their affirmation of the principle of participation in ballets only as an ensemble of interactions with other dancers.

The Bolshoi Ballet is striving for a new in mastery of performance. It is a phenomenon qualitatively new in principle—the birth of the male dance, the transformation of the dancer from a supporting partner of the ballerina into a dramatic person. It is the imparting to male roles, even in the old classical ballets, of the features of manliness, heroicism and immense dynamism. It is an enrichment of the vocabulary of male dance with innovatory, elevated, impetuous spins and jumps, and high lifts.

Life itself dictated new themes and subjects to ballet, and the new themes demanded and determined the new dance vocabulary. The creators of the new male dance in Soviet ballet, which has also had great influence on the female vocabulary, were Alexei Ermolaev and Asaf Messerer, who created a new trend that is now finding convinced followers on the world ballet stage. By their art the ballet dancer, from being a supporting partner of the ballerina, became a real hero of the play, and the male dance a flight of the bold, the energetic, the purposeful.

Now Ermolaev and Messerer, like their colleagues of the same generation Ulanova and Semyonova, are transmitting their vast experience and mastery to the new generation in the ballet theatre. Every day they work with young dancers on their roles and on the creation of original characters, with gifted pupils worthy of the talent of their distinguished teachers. Maximova is successfully studying the role of Giselle immortalised by Ulanova. Vasiliev, an artist with brilliant original gifts, recalls—in the roles of Paganini and Basil—the best work of his talented teacher Ermolaev.

But there is another group of teachers in ballet whose modest work is also infinitely precious and important—the class teachers. Every morning the 230 dancers of the ballet, from the first stars down to the latest recruits to the company, have the compulsory training that determines the necessary professional fitness and produces the high technical mastery of the artists. A leading part among these teachers is played by Asaf Messerer and Elisabeth Gerdt.

Heroic Plisetskaya; lyrical, comic Struchkova; commanding, witty Timo-

feeva; aerial Kondratieva, literally soaring in the air; tender, joyous Maximova, flying Karelskaya and Samokhvalova, lyrical, dramatic Bessmertnova with her soft, immensely emotional elevation; the fiery coloratura character dancers Kasatkina, Trembovetskaya, Kholina, Varlamova and Boguslavakaya; the extraordinarily noble style of Fadeechev; those highly cultured dancers manly Liepa and elegant Sekh; Vasiliev, defying the laws of terrestrial gravity; irrepressible, dashing Lavrovsky; Khokhlov, Tikhonov, Nikonov, all distinguished by their beautiful form; expressive Shamil Yahudin, and Kashanin, a dancer of great inner power—however much one says about the Bolshoi Theatre one cannot say everything. It has to be seen. Ballet is a theatrical art and, like any kind of theatre, it is determined by its visual image.

Yet notwithstanding the fact that the Bolshoi Ballet often goes abroad and that many countries have come to know it through its tours, a tour cannot give a full idea of its artistic personality. Neither the number of dancers nor the decor and dressing of a production on tour is the same as on its home stage. *Romeo and Juliet* has been to Britain and America, but not 'A Square in Verona' as it is on the stage of the Bolshoi Theatre; there it is seventy feet wide and seventy-five feet deep, and 120 dancers and members of the mime company appear in it.

The best touring conditions cannot present such possibilities, not to mention the extraordinarily important components of ballet productions in the Bolshoi Theatre—the ensemble playing of the orchestra, and its responsiveness to the stage as well as to the hand and spirit of the conductor.

And the lighting! The properties! On tour in the USA the ballet took with it fifty tons of baggage—more than 600 costumes and 4,000 pairs of ballet shoes; nevertheless the performances in America could not be like those at home.

The stage of the Bolshoi Theatre, and especially its new stage in the Kremlin, is furnished with the very latest equipment; the lighting is controlled with the aid of a programmed control unit.

The Bolshoi Theatre has its own workshops and studios for scenery and costumes and properties, employing 500 workers of different and unique trades and professions: embossers, needlewomen, shoemakers, dozens of others to make the scenery, and sew the costumes; still others to prepare make-up, make the props and create the thousands upon thousands of wonders that have captivated the imagination of the millions of spectators who come to its productions.

The Bolshoi Ballet is many years old, but—as never before—it is artistically young, full of strength and new ideas and the desire and ability to carry them out.

These facts and observations, perhaps, can be taken as the basis for a friendly discussion about ballet when we meet in London.

TOP POETRY FOR LITTLE ONES

Agnes Barto

IN THE FIRST YEARS after the October Revolution there were few good books for children in the Soviet Union. True, the child's literary heritage included wonderful fairy tales, folk epics, and those masterpieces of Russian and world literature that were accessible to him. There were the fairy tales of Pushkin, the poems of Lermontov and Chukovsky, the fables of Krylov, and the wonderful short stories of Gogol, Chekhov, Gorky and many other masters of the written word. However, the great writers of the past only rarely contemplated writing a book especially for children. Leo Tolstoy was an exception.

Tolstoy's *Russian Reader* included his own delightful stories for children and selections that he considered suitable from the hundreds of stories of world literature. 'When working on his books for children, Tolstoy was as concerned for literary values as educational ones. It was a matter of principle to him as a writer to master both the lengthy epic and the story in four lines. . . . The ability to write concisely and simply was, in his estimation, evidence of the highest skill' (S. Marshak).

In pre-revolutionary Russia, however, children's literature was the creation of second-rate compilers and hacks. Poetry in particular was unlucky. Alexander Blok's poems written for children were lost in a mass of cloying and helpless rhymes by nameless authors (the name of neither the author nor the illustrator appeared on the covers). In the Soviet Union the writing of books for children became a matter of social concern. The aim was to educate a new type of person: materialist in thought and humane, a patriot and an internationalist.

Maxim Gorky and Vladimir Mayakovsky were the founders of Soviet children's literature. On Gorky's initiative a special State Publishing House for Children was set up. He dreamed of a great and rich children's literature, hitherto unknown in the world, and full of ideas and truly artistic. It was once my good fortune to hear those two great artists Maxim Gorky and Romain Rolland (who was visiting Gorky) talk about literature for children. Romain Rolland said jokingly that Gorky had been concerned about children all his life; that was really so. It is interesting to note that in founding this publishing house Gorky took an unusual path. In the first place he turned to the children themselves. The newspapers published a letter to Pioneers and schoolchildren in which he asked them what they would like to read about and what kind of books they fancied.

This appeal stirred and enthused literally all children; not one was left unmoved. There was a flood of pages torn from school exercise books, in which, with grammatical mistakes but immense persuasiveness, children confided, advised and deliberated. Through them one could feel how broad the world was. They replied to Gorky that they were interested in everything. They asked for fairy tales; they wanted to read science fiction; they asked for books about the heroes of the Revolution, about the changing of nature, of 'how friendship changes a person', and 'all about birds', and 'all about trees'. 'Give us thick books, so that we don't part from the characters too soon', the older children asked; while the little ones wrote: 'We like thin books because you read and read a thick book and get tired.'

In reply to these letters a special children's publishing house was founded, which began to put out picture books for tiny tots, stories and verses for pre-school children, books for schoolchildren, and literature for adolescents. Gorky enlisted the greatest Soviet authors to write for children, and young writers whom he considered capable of working in this field. So in the years after the Revolution such outstanding prose writers as Alexei Tolstoy, M. Prishvin and Valentin Katayev began writing for children, while Arkady Gaidar, Vitaly Bianki, Leo Kassil, Boris Zhitkov and Mikhail Ilyin devoted their talent exclusively to them.

Books of verse for small children appeared—real poetry, not glib, sugary, lady-like rhymes. Kornei Chukovsky was one of our first pre-revolutionary writers to create genuinely children's verses that were at the same time masterly in form. Millions of readers of several generations have now grown up on them. Before the Revolution he was already known as a literary critic who had written a number of angry articles directed against the then well-known children's writer Lydia Charskaya. Her books were harmful to the young reader because she captured his imagination by false romance and melodrama.

There were endless scenes of sick-beds and death-beds, and all sorts of horrors, spells and hysterics. Once again it was Maxim Gorky who prompted Chukovsky to write children's poetry, saying : 'One good children's book is worth a dozen critical articles. You should create something different. . . . The best way of polemic is not in words, but in deeds.' Soon after this meeting with Gorky Chukovsky wrote *Crocodile*, the first of his now famous lilting, mischievous poems for children.

THE THREE 'Ms'

VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY was the first to write a fundamentally different kind of poetry for children. It was serious yet entertaining, and had a very special gentle respect for the child. Mayakovsky rewrote and improved these poems from one edition to the next.

Our first 'Children's Book Day' was held in Moscow in 1928. Today it has become 'Children's Book Week', held annually throughout the country. All the Moscow poets were invited to the first 'Book Day', but Mayakovsky was the only 'established' one to accept. I recall his enthusiasm when he spoke to the young audience in the park. His poetry and eloquence made a great impression. Mayakovsky came over to our group of young poets and exclaimed enthusiastically : 'What an audience ! We must write for them !' In all, he wrote sixteen poems for children, in which he taught them to honour the worker and his work. His book *What is Good and What is Bad* is a lesson of this sort, presented in the form of a serious yet lively conversation between a father and his little son. His wonderful book *What Shall I Be ?* is about people of various professions and trades ; it reveals the character of the Soviet worker and the fascination of work. Mayakovsky believed that poetry for children was an important means of revolutionary education, but he went about it in a witty, entertaining way. Many of his poems were presented as short plays ; others were composed as riddles or jingles.

The reaction to Mayakovsky's poems for children was mixed. Some teachers considered them completely unsuitable. But today they are a standard part of every school reader ; and they determined the future of Soviet children's poetry.

Samuel Marshak was one of our outstanding children's poets. Every child in our country knows his verses by heart. His poetry is the pride, the very basis of our poetry for children. His ballads and stories in rhyme are contemporary, and have true poetic scope and great technical brilliance.

Marshak speaks to the child of the new qualities of the Soviet citizen, of the fundamental difference between the new way of life and the old. In his poem *Fighting the Dnieper* he presents a vivid picture of man's mastery over the forces of nature. His poetry is always topical, lyrical and full of humour.

Marshak was a magnificent translator of Shakespeare and Burns ; he brought Mother Goose to our small readers, and translated many of A. A. Milne's gentle and humorous poems.

Marshak was closer to Maxim Gorky than any other of our writers. He was Gorky's protégé, then colleague, in the campaign to create a real literature for children. Gorky discovered Marshak in the thirties, when he was still a young man. At the first Congress of Soviet Writers Gorky suggested that one subject on the agenda should be a report on literature for children, and he asked Marshak to prepare it. Marshak was also a literary critic. He wrote several interesting articles on children's literature, which he always felt should be *good* literature first and foremost.

Our children have a poet whose work bubbles with life and joy. His name is Sergei Mikhalkov. All children adore his *Uncle Steve*, not only because he

is funny but because he is compassionate, a very tall man with a very big heart. Thus the scene describing the way in which Uncle Steve prevents a railway crash is not simply heroic, it is comic as well, for both the engine-driver and the stoker think lanky Uncle Steve is a signal post.

Many of Mikhalkov's poems are deeply moving—*In the Lenin Museum*, for instance—but he has also written mischievous and charming satirical poems and fables that attack arrogance and complacency. Of his poem *Stubborn Thomas Fadeyev* wrote: 'This is a battle against scepticism, against bad faith.' He is also a well-known children's playwright, and his plays are regularly presented in children's theatres throughout the country.

For a long time there were very few children's writers in the Union Republics, but now there are many talented, original poets, such as Alexandrova, Tarakhovskaya, Blaginina, Lifshitz, Baruzdin, Korzhikov, Kurlat, and others, whose works are charming and full of fresh imagination. Thus, the Ukrainian Platon Voronko is very original, while Kudus Mukhammadi of Uzbekistan writes with sly humour. In Tadzikistan, Byelorussia, Lithuania and Armenia new poets have emerged whose works are enjoyed by children all over the Soviet Union.

A CHILDREN'S WRITER MUST BE BORN

THE GREAT Russian literary critic Belinsky, who wrote with such inspiration of Pushkin and Lermontov, was always keenly interested in children's books. He wrote that one must be born a children's writer. What does this really mean? That one must preserve the memory of one's childhood all through life? Far more than that! To be born a children's writer means that one must understand the child's psychology and sense his fresh, uncluttered perception of the world. But this inborn gift is not enough. One must incessantly sharpen one's powers of observation in order to recognize the new qualities of today's child.

There was a theory of 'preserved childhood' that Makarenko spoke of so ironically in his time. According to it, children's literature deals with themes that are unchanging, and are repeated in each generation, being locked in a kind of magic circle, because the interests of the child are predictable for all time. We Soviet writers regard the term 'childhood' as a symbol of movement, not immobility; of change, and not of set values. At this age—though in their own way and within the limits of their ideas of the world—the interests of children are amazingly diverse and contemporary.

A seven-year-old boy spelt out the words 'Peace means . . .' on a poster.

'Peace means life' his mother prompted.

'But what is life?' the boy asked.

'You're too little to understand', his mother replied.

The boy objected. 'I'm not a baby. I know what peace means.' And then he felt, rather than understood, the great meaning hidden in these words. 'Life means to have peace, doesn't it?' he said.

This is what a boy wrote after reading *Little Mouk*, by Gauf: 'I would use the magic wand to find silver and gold and would give it to the government, and the magic shoes would help my team to win every match. What fun I'd have!'

What difference is there between this boy and all the other dreamers of his age? Millions of boys of all times, their heads full of fairy tales, have dreamt of magic transformations of hidden treasure and gold, but they dreamed of personal wealth, of happiness for themselves. This boy, however, regards the magic wand as a means of saving society!

Our children are interested in questions of moral qualities. They want the answer not only to 'What shall I do?' but to 'What sort of a person shall I

be ? ' Most charming of all are the letters received from the youngest readers. A nine-year-old boy wrote : ' I know I should like work, but I'm still awfully lazy. How can I change ? ' A little girl wrote : ' At what age do you have to start getting rid of selfishness ? ' And here is a letter from a young reader who was terribly upset at Little Red Riding Hood's unwarranted faith in the wolf. ' Dear Little Red Riding Hood ', she wrote, ' don't trust the wolf any more or he'll eat you again ' !

There is an avalanche of requests now—please write about space ! Our children's minds have been completely captured by the heroic cosmonauts. A group of twelve-year-olds wrote : ' We admire the real friendship between Yuri Gagarin and Herman Titov, the cosmic brothers. We earth-brothers of the sixth-grade are not always such real friends. Write a book that would help us prepare for great deeds and real friendship.' ' I want to read all about the unexplored planets because they will be explored very soon ! ' writes an eleven-year-old boy. ' Write some poems about underwater adventures. If you don't know much about life under water you can find out about it ', one of my young readers kindly suggests.

Sometimes a child's request confronts the writer with a difficult problem, such as this one from a twelve-year-old schoolboy : ' Please write a book about the past, present and future of the Earth from two points of view, the geographical and the historic.'

While in Bulgaria, in the small town of Byala Slatina, I visited a family whose thirteen-year-old daughter Petrinka had a large biscuit-box prominently displayed in her room. She opened it so carefully and handled it so lovingly that it was easy to see that her greatest treasures were kept there—perhaps stamps for swaps or sea shells gathered along the coast during a camp hike. No, there were letters in the box. Petrinka believes that all people should be friends and that all the children of the world should correspond ; then, when they grow up, they will band together so that there will never be another war ! Petrinka asked me excitedly if I could help her find a pen friend among the schoolchildren of Moscow. I must confess that I acted rashly when I gave her address on a Moscow television programme. Two weeks later I received a telephone call from Bulgaria. It was Petrinka's father. His voice sounded worried as he asked me what he should do, for in the past ten days his daughter had received 3,500 letters ! The small post office of their little town was in chaos.

Let Petrinka tell you about it herself. ' One morning I received twenty-four letters from Moscow all at once. I was very happy and immediately sat down to answer them all. I had answered twenty when the phone rang and someone from the post office said I should come over and pick up 750 more letters. The next day I kept on getting more and more, and I became very worried, because I was afraid I wouldn't be able to answer all of them. We decided to call a meeting of all our young Pioneers and discuss the difficult problem of how to answer all the letters.'

The general meeting decided to share them with all the children in the town who wanted to correspond with the Moscow children. But it soon became evident that there would not be enough children to go round, for by that time the number of letters had reached nearly 6,000 ! A new decision was taken. They would write to the *Young Pioneer* newspaper and tell all the children of Bulgaria that they could correspond with a boy or girl in Moscow. And thus a lively correspondence was begun, full of strong feeling, of opinions on books just read, or for instance, ' When I grow up I'll try to find the bacilli of death, so that no one will die any more ! '

Incidentally, before I went to Bulgaria a Moscow schoolboy said ' Be sure to shake hands with all the Bulgarian children you meet.'

‘Why?’ I asked in surprise.

‘To see what kind of muscles they have’, he said; and added seriously, ‘We’re interested in their athletic abilities’.

You can imagine the hearty way Bulgarian boys greeted me when they discovered that their honour as sportsmen was at stake. They put all their strength into their handshakes!

Letters from children, and a close association with them, help a writer to understand today’s child, and to share his life in a new society.

NOT ONLY THE READER NEEDS THEMES OF SIGNIFICANCE

A CHILDREN’S WRITER must be keenly aware of contemporary values because his writing helps to form character. How can he foresee the traits of character of the future if he is not fully in touch with the present?

The bold themes of present-day life, presented in an original way by talented poets, have led children’s poetry out of the nursery. In words both poetic and simple they speak to the child of the most important things: love for one’s country, for labour, and for the people who are building a new society. A spirit of peace and friendship has swept into books for children. It is not only the reader who needs a theme of significance, but the writer as well, for it evokes new thoughts and emotions, and demands a great store of life’s experience; it enriches the poet and helps him to rise to new heights of creative endeavour. It is essential that the poet be passionately concerned with some definite aspect of life and that he feel compelled to express his attitude towards it. If he does not have a theme that is close to his heart he will never create a moving work.

In my many years of work I have become convinced that the poet is at his best when dealing with the most pressing themes of his time. I greatly regret that I cannot quote from the best of our children’s poems—for instance, from the heroic ballad of an unknown youth who risked his life to save a child and then went off before anyone could find out his name; or the lyrical poem about whose mother is best, which reflects the broad rights and opportunities enjoyed by our working women. Merely to describe a poem without quoting it is not worth doing; but believe me when I say that after reading several of our children’s books you would feel the pulse of our life.

I want to stress that a significant theme demands true artistry. We always warn young poets against a superficial approach. A ten-year-old schoolgirl wrote in her diary: ‘I will write down my thoughts in this diary, when I have any. Today I didn’t have any thoughts, so I won’t write anything.’ A poet would do well not to write a book for children if he has put no thought behind it.

KITTENS, RABBITS AND SUCH

HOW MUCH should there be about kittens and rabbits in poetry for children? All children are interested in nature, in its plants, insects, wild life and household animals, and all these have a time-honoured place in books written for them. But I believe that no matter what a poet is writing about, if he has a sense of his times, any one of his characters can appear in a new light.

Korzhikov’s first book of poems is called *The Sea Horse*. There have been others besides this young poet who have described the bottom of the sea and its inhabitants. Korzhikov looks at it in a different way. The sea suddenly

becomes 'part of today' when a tankful of fry—unusual travellers indeed—are transported by plane from the Black Sea to the Caspian. It is important not merely to say something new about a kitten or rabbit, but to evoke living, contemporary thoughts, emotions and images in the reader's mind. There has been an increasing number of poems, for instance, that speak of the transformation of nature, where nature itself appears to the child as a gigantic workshop in which man labours and creates incessantly in the name of happiness for all.

MORALS, MORALISING AND HUMOUR

THE READER will accept a moral on one condition, that it is not tacked on to the poem; instead, it must be a vital and natural part of the theme. A moral is good when the reader himself discovers it.

Sometimes the moral is not voiced, but is self-evident. This means it will be understood.

I would like to make four quotations.

The first: 'It is of primary importance to have as little sententiousness, moralising and philosophising as possible: adults do not like it, while children abhor it' (Belinsky).

The second: 'The author should make children think; then they will find the application of the story themselves, quite freely and naturally, without having it forced upon them' (N. A. Dobrolyubov).

The third: 'What right do you have to assume that children will be interested in your story if its characters are not living, breathing people but mere faceless images, walking moralisers, as it were?' (Saltykov-Shchedrin).

The fourth: 'Anything that captures the imagination will not quickly be forgotten' (Gogol).

How unanimous the great Russian thinkers were in their opinions! They were all in favour of realistic books for children; they were all against dry lecturing and moralising.

Belinsky was most forceful in his articles. He believed that lecturing would only make 'young ancients' of children, that it would kill all the energy and liveliness which they, the future fighters for men's rights, would need. He was afraid that the children would get used 'to the insipid water of philosophising and it will seem better to them than the nectar of poetry'.

Chernyshevsky even wrote a biting parody, *Fedinka and Petinka*, that poked fun at the tendency to moralise and the dry-as-dust language of children's books of his time. 'Fedinka didn't like to study, but Petinka did. Fedinka said "I know everything", but Petinka said "If I don't study I won't know anything." When they grew up Fedinka didn't know anything at all, but Petinka became a very learned gentleman.'

Progressive educationists in the Soviet Union have always stood for children's books with an implicit message, and have been against petty moralising.

I find that once again I look to Gorky. He believed that the deepest and most serious theme must always be entertainingly presented. 'One must talk to children in a jolly way', he said. He spoke to them and answered their letters with merry seriousness. Here is how he replied to a letter he received from a group of children, enclosing money they were sending to the people of Messina, the victims of an earthquake.

'From the bottom of my heart, you wonderful little people, I hope that all your lives you will remain as compassionate and sensitive to another's grief as you have been now. The best contentment and greatest joy in life is to feel that people need you and that you are close to them. This is the truth. Do not forget it and it will bring you true happiness. . . . Be good, love each other

and—make mischief ; for then when you are old men and old women you'll have a merry time recalling it. I shake your paws fondly, and may they be clean and strong for all your days.'

In one of his articles he wrote : 'The tendency to amuse the child is not evidence of "distrust or disrespect towards him" ; it is necessary from the teaching point of view as a guarantee that there will be no danger of stifling him with "serious" things, or of producing a hostile attitude towards what is "serious". And at the same time it stimulates his imagination.'

I recall how pleased Gorky was at getting a letter from a young reader.

'Dear Maxim Gorky', she wrote, 'I like funny books. I am eight years old. Lisa Cherkizova'.

Gorky nodded merrily and said : 'That's a convincing argument. This person is eight years old. We must give her funny books !'

An Overheard Conversation, by the young poet Y. Kornits, is a book with its own deep moral. A little stream gurgles along over the rocks. Its fate is unknown to us. It may become part of the ocean far away, and great ships will rock on its waves. But perhaps it will stop rushing headlong along and will doze off in a dense forest. Then the mosquito will hum over it, a grass-snake will make its home nearby, and moss and slime will cover the stagnant waters. The reader understands that this applies not only to the little stream, but to the path one chooses for oneself in life. Thus the moral is a natural part of the poem.

Not long ago the merry tale *All About a Truck* by the young poet Valentin Berestov was very well received by poets and teachers alike. Its theme is quite original, and children easily grasp its hidden meaning. A little girl is given a toy truck, which can go very quickly in any direction. But the girl says : 'I am so fond of you, I won't wind you up.' This over-protectiveness finally makes the truck quite ill. It seems that the cab cannot live without a load, that the truck does not need peace : it needs movement. The moral of this little tale is quite evident to the child, though nowhere at all does the poet openly say that idleness never does anyone any good.

Humour is a very powerful tool. In speaking of moral themes, for instance, it is the perfect form of expressing serious concepts, and one that children understand very readily. They quickly sense the irony, the comic hyperbole in rhyme, where fun is made of the 'master-wrecker', or of a spoiled boy who is growing up like a hot-house plant, or of 'stubborn Thomas' or 'sly Akhmed'. Many of our poets have written well-known series of humorous and satirical poems ; these are not superficial witticisms, but deep, warm humour or biting satire conveying a good moral. A true children's writer is always endowed with the talent of an educator. Types of people are detailed with such sharp accuracy that many lines have become proverbs, the names of the 'characters' have become part of the language, and they help children to rid themselves of similar faults. Thus in a gay and subtle way the poems instil truthfulness, honour, love for labour, and respect towards one's elders. Of course, there are books that are just funny, without any special meaning, just for the sake of fun, but they are not typical of our sense of humour.

Yes, laughter is a great force. But the quality of the poem is extremely important. The well-known German artist and poet Wilhelm Busch offered the following as subjects : a cat crazed with pain, because the little girl smiling so happily beside it has just set its tail on fire (*The Home Treasury of Humour*). Or, in another instance, we are asked to laugh at the plight of another cat whose tail has been torn off and the end of its spine revealed.

Is this funny ?

Perhaps this cruel, bestial laughter is in some respects the grandfather of the ugly laughter of the comics.

THE SKILL OF A CHILDREN'S POET

WHATEVER THEME a writer takes, he must never forget that his reader is a child. He must skilfully choose his words, find an interesting theme and a lively, swift-moving form.

When you read a finished work by a true master of writing, every aspect of it pleases you : the profound thought behind it, the interesting subject matter, the simplicity and accuracy of the words, the conciseness, the well-chosen rhyme, the ingenious, fresh rhyme.

One of the basic elements of children's poetry is simplicity. But this simplicity is achieved not by an impoverishment of the poet's vocabulary, but by his skill in achieving the greatest expressiveness through simple means. Folk poetry is also simple in form, but how imaginative, dynamic and pure its language is. How accurate and laconic is the language of a proverb ! The same scrupulous accuracy and conciseness must be a part of poems for children. When they meet these demands they often become proverbs in their own right. 'All mothers are needed, all mothers are heeded' and 'Where's the time to chatter ? I've no time to chatter' are but two. Many lines from children's poems have become part of our living language.

The poet must be able to record the live voice of the child in his poems, to convey the child's natural intonation as he actually speaks. There are those who wonder how the grown-up poet can convey not only the feelings but the intonation of a small mischievous boy, for very often children's poems are written in the first person. That is one of his 'secrets'. On the one hand he seems to become a child himself, the main character of his poem ; yet at the same time he subtly retains his adult attitude towards the child.

Rhythm is all-important. The best of our poets have brought to our children's poetry the rhythm of the jingle, the ditty, the teasing chant, making it more flexible ; one can hear the children's voices in it ; it has the qualities of actual speech.

Some poets prefer to change the metre of the poem freely, as they believe that this arouses fresh interest in the young listener. Of course, it is most important that the harmony remain, that the poem have its own musical pivot, its own musical solution. Yet the same metre often sounds quite different in a poem written by a true master.

What a variety of cadence and intonation Pushkin achieved within the same metre ! For instance, a poem about a cat looking for a mouse and a poem about parting from one's beloved are both in the same metre, yet the first sounds funny while the second is filled with romantic inspiration.

Unity of content and metre—this is the main point of all poetry, both for adults and for children.

Children's poets like to play with words. As Gorky said : 'It is in the play of words particularly that the child learns the nuances of his native tongue, comprehends its music and what philologists call the spirit of the language.' One should by no means speak to a child in the flat literary 'milk toast' tones cooked up specially for infants !

As to rhyme, some may ask what can be better than a ringing, pointed, classical rhyme. But children's poetry needs all types of rhymes, both the complex and the inner, the jumbled and resounding and dissonant. It is not necessary to have rhymes-for-the-eye in children's poetry. Here the popular folk method of sound rhyming is quite appropriate. This is especially true in the case of the tiny tots who do not yet know how to read but who grasp the music of a rhyme so perfectly. The rhyme is a means of expression, and not an end in itself. That is why it can be judged only in context.

Many adults know a great number of children's poems by heart, and like

them. This is not only because, in our country, questions of education are widely discussed, but also because our poetry for children has become a part of our literary heritage and is loved by all who love poetry.

‘A real live writer has come to visit us!’ the children usually say. One can read a second meaning into this childish expression. A ‘live’ writer is one whose warmth kindles emotions in others.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAIRY TALES

LEO TOLSTOY wrote: ‘The writer of the future will understand how important it is to write a fairy tale, a little song that will touch the heart, a ditty, a riddle that will amuse, a funny story that will make dozens of generations, millions of children and adults, laugh and be happy.’

Tolstoy had clairvoyance. Indeed, in our country books for children are addressed to millions of children and grown-ups as well; they are for everyone; they are intended for the widest audiences and the prints are tremendous.

Though there have been no millionaires in the USSR for a very long time, this title is jestingly awarded to several of our children’s writers, as their books are printed by the million. For instance, books by Marshak, Chukovsky, Mikhalkov and myself have nearly astronomical prints, totalling 45,000,000. There are some series in which 1,500,000 copies are printed of each volume.

A teacher from a collective farm secondary school in Turkmenia told me the following story. He asked his first-year pupils what they saw at home every day. The children began to enumerate: chairs, tables, beds, books. And then, as if they understood what he was driving at, they all began to shout ‘Books, books, books!’

Today Soviet children’s books are printed in fifty-seven languages, including twenty-two languages of peoples who prior to the Revolution did not have a written language of their own.

Among our books there are those that are very well written and those that are less talented, but we can vouch that there is not a single book that in any way instils in the child cruelty and hate, a lust for wealth, a passion to destroy or a thirst for war. We Soviet writers are inspired by the thought that we are taking part in creating a truly human literature for the new, growing person. May all the children of the world have deeply moral and truly artistic books to guide them.

This article is the text of a paper originally read by the author at an exhibition of Soviet children’s books at the National Book League.

SOCIOLOGY IN THE SOVIET UNION

Maurice Hookham

'...institutional sociology is unknown in the USSR. Any attempt to introduce it would undermine the official taboo surrounding such notions as that in the Soviet Union the working class has acquired political power...'

—*Marxism*, George Lichtheim, 1961, p. 375.

DURING the period 1934 to 1954 very little sociological research was done in the Soviet Union and even less published. There was a widespread belief that Marxist sociology did not exist. The general theory of historical materialism with particular propositions derived from it was expounded as social science. There was in this period a neglect both of the ideas and methods developed by Marx, Engels and Lenin and of the detailed study of particular social problems (with the possible exception of those in the fields of psychology and pedagogy). This belief was further supported by the absence of references to sociology in discussion of the social sciences in the Soviet Union and the absence of special journals devoted to sociology. Standard works like the *Short Philosophical Dictionary* and the *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism* carried short references to sociology, mainly consisting of confusing attempts to distinguish historical materialism from bourgeois sociology.

In the thirties the Webbs deplored the absence of sociological studies in the Soviet Union, particularly as there had been a long and rich tradition of interest in sociology before the Revolution. In 1934 Dr. J. F. Hecker published a book entitled *Russian Sociology* (under the dateline Ipswich, England) based on work he had done for his doctorate at Columbia before World War I. In this he traced the development of Marxist sociology in Russia back to the eighteenth century with the rise of popular movements against the autocracy. The great Russian social philosophers who featured in this development, like Danilevsky, Herzen, Chernishevsky, Kropotkin, Sorokin and Plekhanov, had a considerable influence on the writings of sociologists throughout the world. He wrote: 'Much of what is in vogue among sociologists today has been worked at by Russian sociologists. They were among the first to rid sociology of Darwinism and Spencerianism and to seek to establish it upon a sound scientific basis.'

Some of these people also inspired the work of Sechenov into the physiology of the higher nervous system, later developed by Pavlov, which is discussed by Brian Simon in the volume on Soviet psychology published in England in 1957.

After the Revolution some work was done on social problems, especially by psychologists on problems of adolescents. (There is, for example, a full annotated bibliography of this work in *Psikhologia*, Vol. IV, sections 3-4, 1931, pp. 401-420.)

After the death of Stalin in 1953, interest in this work was revived and extended to a much wider field of social problems. In 1956 Soviet representatives attended the third World Congress of Sociologists, and they have presented papers at subsequent congresses in 1959 and 1962. In 1956 the dogmatism and scholasticism which had replaced scientific research in the social sciences in the Soviet Union during the Stalin period was roundly condemned; it was recognised that concrete research into social problems was vitally necessary in a rapidly developing society. In 1958 the Soviet Sociological Association was formed, uniting more than forty research institutes and social science departments engaged in sociological research.

Sociologists are trained mainly in the philosophy departments of the larger universities, as well as in postgraduate courses provided at most of the institutes

of higher education. Both the undergraduate and postgraduate courses include practical work involving some concrete sociological research into current social problems, and throughout the courses emphasis is placed on the study of actual social situations as a necessary prerequisite for the understanding and development of sociological theory.

Among the features of Marxist sociology are the investigation of objective social reality interpreted in the light of the theory that society is not a mechanical sum of individuals and social groups in isolation, but a whole bound together by definite social relations characteristic of that particular society. These relations are seen to be in a state of motion, and the object of the sociologist is to formulate a scientific theory of social progress and to contribute to a purposeful change in accordance with the objective requirements of social development. In defining the trends of this development it is necessary to discover the mechanism by which they work in given concrete conditions of place and time.

Social problems under investigation by Soviet sociologists may be roughly grouped under three headings: problems connected with the creation of the material and technical bases of communism, including increases in labour productivity, training and organisation of the labour force; problems connected with the development of communist social relations, including property ownership, the elimination of differences between town and country life and between intellectual and physical labour, the position of women and young people in society; and problems connected with individual development, including the family, education, culture and leisure time, the elimination of anti-social tendencies.

An example of an investigation falling within the last category was reported in an article entitled 'The Rationalisation of Labour in the Home in order to Increase Leisure Time'.* This is a piece of sociological research directed by the staff of the Economic Institute of the Siberian section of the Soviet Academy of Science. This investigation showed that a reduction of the working day by one hour did not in many cases lead to any increase in leisure time. The extra hour was spent on more sleep, housework and looking after the children. It was reported that working women spend on average four to five hours a day on housework, which gives them a working day of between eleven and twelve hours.

The drudgery of housework tells on the productive efficiency of those women employed, and wholly absorbs the activity of some 12,000,000 women, according to the census of 1959. A rationalisation of housework would make it possible for 9,000,000 or 10,000,000 of them to be employed in productive activity, amounting to about 3,000,000,000 working days. This is seen to be a serious economic and social problem, which is being tackled gradually by the extension of communal services such as public catering, laundries, and centres for the hire of domestic appliances of all kinds. It is estimated that a domestic washing machine may save up to 500 hours a year. A report in *Izvestia* (April 14, 1964) stated that a hundred milliard man-hours a year were spent on housework, and of these some 60 per cent could be saved by the provision of a full range of electric appliances in the home. Figures provided by the RSFSR Central Statistical Administration for June 1962 showed that for each 100 families there were the following units for domestic electrical appliances:†

* Voprosy filosofii, 1964, No. 12.

† The relatively low level of availability of domestic appliances should be viewed in the light of the rapid expansion in their provision from 1954 to 1963, when the sale of vacuum cleaners multiplied by 14.5, refrigerators by 17 and washing machines by 605. In 1964 alone about 1,000,000 refrigerators and 2,000,000 washing machines were produced.

				Industrial workers	Engineering white-collar workers	Collective farmers
Refrigerators...	..	..	..	2.9	8.1	0.3
Washing machines	..	..	..	10.1	18.6	0.5
Vacuum cleaners	..	..	..	2.3	6.8	0.04
Floor polishers	..	..	..	0.1	0.7	0.01

The article gives additional interesting data on the availability of domestic appliances in the homes of industrial workers according to level of income and to housing space.

Concrete research of this kind is now being done extensively. At first sight it does not appear to differ from similar investigations in western countries. Two points in which it does tend to differ are that much of the work of collecting the information is done by voluntary labour of trade union members, who are made conscious of the evidence produced in the investigations and encouraged to support the conclusions and recommendations for action that result from them.

The previous issue of the same journal contained a review of a book published in Moscow in 1963 on *Public Opinion in Soviet Society*, in which the reviewer reported that the political and ideological unity of the Soviet people far from signifies complete unity of their views on many questions of social life, including moral, legal and æsthetic questions. There are differences of opinion about matters of taste, norms of behaviour, moral questions, art and literature, the value of various economic decisions, and the activities of state and social organisations. These differences can harden into a polarisation of opinions which can exist for quite a long while without any noticeable changes in their support. Examples mentioned are differences of opinion about the form of the birth certificate for illegitimate children, the reform of Russian spelling, and the polemic over the measures designed to increase the role of the law of value under socialism.

There are also differences of views among Soviet sociologists about the character of Marxist sociology. At a conference held in October 1963 in Moscow, Academician L. Ilyichev stated that the extension of research in the social sciences had brought to light new methodological problems that demanded serious consideration in relation to the subject of sociology. He distinguished a number of different conceptions of Marxist sociology held by both Soviet and foreign Marxists. Some equate sociology with Marxism; others relate sociology to the theory of scientific communism, and others see the same kind of distinction between historical materialism and Marxist sociology as exists between theoretical and applied aspects of any branch of knowledge. He mentioned that there were yet other points of view and that it would be wrong to deny to protagonists of these different standpoints the right to defend their views. In addition he pointed out that there is a tendency for further differentiation in the social sciences, and hence it was desirable to refrain from impatient attitudes to differences about them, as each of the viewpoints contained a rational kernel which could not be rejected out of hand.

The lively arguments about sociological theory, the testing of theories in concrete investigations of social problems and growing contacts between Soviet sociologists with workers in other countries all suggest that there is a bright future for sociology in the Soviet Union. Books and monographs are now filling out the journal articles that have been published in increasing numbers. The interest in this work in the West has encouraged the publication of a series of translations which will appear in the near future.

The Subject Matter and Methods of Sociological Research

Igor Petrov

THERE has been a considerable increase in recent years in the volume of Soviet sociological research by Soviet sociologists in co-operation with economists, statisticians, mathematicians, engineers, psychologists, and other social scientists. Although the argument about the relation between historical materialism, sociology and concrete sociological research has not been overlooked, life itself, and the turning of philosophers to research into contemporary social problems, has decided the question. At present the process of differentiation in sociological research has brought about a delimitation of different problems and a specialised study of them; technical progress and the rationalised activity of the worker of a new type; changes in the occupation of Soviet workers and their role in the development of personality; free time and its use by working people.

The sociological aspects of any question of contemporary social development may be the subject of study: war and peace; international relations (co-existence and collaboration of various countries and social systems); problems of social policy; social and national communities; social structure, problems of power, democracy, freedom, revolutions, etc. Individuality and the masses; the development of different countries along the road of independence and prosperity; natural wealth and the growth of productive forces; technical and social progress; automation and social relations; social forms of organisation—all are questions studied. At present there is a development of joint study of social subjects—town and country, the peasantry, the working class, the intelligentsia—and of various occupational groups. Along with this there has been a deeper investigation of particular problems of everyday life and of survivals of the past. There has been a great development in the sociology of science, culture, education, art and religion, and attempts at a sociological study of 'values'; and there has also been intensive work on sociological problems in anthropology, ethnography, history, jurisprudence, pedagogy and psychiatry. Many questions have been broached in the field of social psychology, social and individual consciousness, public opinion, and problems of authority. In addition the development of sociological theory itself, its criteria, and the problems of practical, applied, empirical research have arisen as a subject of study.

Research is being carried out by state and social organisations, research institutes and laboratories. Research groups, laboratories and institutes working on a voluntary basis have also been set up. The Bureau of the Leningrad Regional Committee of the CPSU supported the initiative of Leningrad University, the Herzen Pedagogical Institute, Leningrad Polytechnic, the Forestry Engineering Academy, and several enterprises, to set up an Institute of Social Research on such a basis. Its objects are defined as sociological research on current problems of ideological work and the preparation of recommendations for Party, state, economic and social organisations, aimed at improving the effectiveness of their work. The main problems with which the Institute is concerned are those connected with changes in the occupational structure of the working class; changes in the character and content of labour as a result of technical progress; political enlightenment as a means of ideological education of the working people; the formation of a communist attitude to work in the working youth of Leningrad; questions of their leisure and its rational use.

Sociological groups and laboratories have also been set up in Moscow, Kiev, Novosibirsk, Sverdlovsk, Gorky, Krasnoyarsk and other towns.

Research into new forms of labour and everyday life has been carried out by the sociological sector of the Institute of Philosophy of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Several chairs and laboratories of Moscow University are engaged on

sociological themes; the Laboratory for Study of Problems of Industrial Management is studying most important problems of the sociology of management. In a very short period the Laboratory of Sociological Research of the Faculty of Philosophy completed projects on various themes: new forms of educational work were studied on data from Moscow factories; and the process of democratisation of soviets and trends emerging in social self-government. In particular, the role of standing committees in the further democratisation of soviets was examined; the role of deputies as statesmen; more effective ways of extending the executive authority of deputies; the significance of voluntary organisations and other forms of involving the masses in state administration.

The sociological laboratories of Moscow and Leningrad Universities have undertaken a study of the formation of communist attitudes to work as a primary requirement of life among young workers in their cities.*

Research into existing working conditions helps in the preparation of practical recommendations for the elimination of shortcomings. To this end the staff of the Sociological Laboratory of Moscow University took 20 per cent of the total personnel of three Moscow factories (the Special Machine Tool Works, the Machine Tool Aggregate Works and the Grinding Machinery Works), and concentrated attention on a study of the major objective and subjective factors forming the attitude of workers to their jobs. The relevant factors are: material incentives; the importance of the product; physical and mental work; the possibility of improving skill; shiftwork; the organisation, rhythm and cultural level of production; the quality of equipment; safety technique and labour protection; relations with fellow workers and the administration. Small-scale studies of this problem were made available to each factory.

In several examples of recent research special attention has been given to the role of relations between members of a production collective, which exercise considerable influence on labour productivity, quality of work, and the creative attitudes of each worker to labour. Having studied these influences, the Sociological Laboratory of Moscow University made a number of recommendations on how to eliminate everything alien to the spirit of collectivism more rapidly from the life of the collective: inattention to the needs of workers; peremptory shouting; coarseness; administration and bureaucratic attitudes—everything that does not correspond to the spirit of a socialist community and comradeship. These conclusions have a wider application.†

The object studied by sociology, as with other social sciences, is peculiar. The investigator of social processes must above all take into consideration the existence of will, consciousness and human requirements, which are constituent elements of the matter studied. And the subjective sides of social relations—opinions, motives, feelings and the habits of millions of people—complicate objective study. It is also necessary to take the complexity of the social object into account, the difficulty of accounting for the multiplicity of the interrelated factors of its existence and development, and also the dynamism of the social system and the special role of time in social research.

Let us assume that it is necessary to study the life of people in dozens of collectives for the past year. Even a large group of investigators is in no position to establish directly the whole totality and continuous course of the living events, conflicts and activities of these collectives over the course of a year. It is necessary to take into account the 'fluidity' of the material and the impossi-

* See A. G. Zravomyslov, V. A. Yadov: Experience of Concrete Investigation of Attitudes to Labour, *Voprosy filosofii*, 1964, No. 4.

† See N. G. Valentinova: 'The Influence of the Collective in Increasing Interest in Work', *Voprosy filosofii*, 1964, No. 6.

bility of even approximately re-establishing the whole chain of events. The irreversibility of movements in the fortunes of people, and of social development, the impossibility of reproducing events and processes in their exact form and sequence, obliges the sociologist, in a sense, to approach social relations in the same way as the historian, to reproduce a picture of changes on the basis of hard objectively formed results of people's activity. Some researchers, however, do not take the passage of time into account, and in planning the theme of their research (for example, the influence of the collective on the formation of the individual personality) drag out its execution over two or three years. While they are collecting the facts and collating them and drawing conclusions the life of the group has moved forward so far that the practical value of the research suffers.

Finally, attention has to be given to the unique, individual character of social phenomena. The methodology of studying their individual peculiarities has as yet been given little attention.

In order to carry out social research successfully it is necessary to know the 'structure' of the social material. Historians, economists, lawyers and teachers, as well as sociologists, study, on the one hand, social connections and relations (economic, political, moral, æsthetic, and religious). These connections appear as a system of interrelated elements, but unfortunately some researchers (for example, in studying the attitudes of young people to work) stop short at merely economic, technological and organisational attitudes to production without any kind of circumstantial inclusion of all the other social connections taken as a system of social relations.

On the other hand, the material of sociological analysis includes social practice and the totality of social activities both of groups of people and collectives and of separate individuals.

The sociologist is concerned with mass activities and their results. But individuals, if they have an influence on the course of events, must not be omitted from the field of study and must be reckoned in the general balance of interrelations.

It would be wrong to identify social attitudes and human action—such an understanding is often the source of voluntarism and subjectivism. The social relations of people are realised in deeds and actions, but social attitudes at the same time direct the needs and actions of people and in the end determine their character and content both in the area of production and in the sphere of everyday life, the family, etc. The sociologist has to study a complicated system of practical activities in order to establish a realistic picture of events in a concrete form and to understand the objective pattern of social processes. Practical activity is an objective index and criterion of the evaluation of social attitudes, consciousness, motives and feelings. To cognise all these spheres it is necessary to pay attention to practical life and to social activities.

Cognition of social phenomena is a complex process presupposing knowledge of the totality of principles, methods and peculiarities of the study of social processes. Unfortunately, the 'mechanism' of cognising systems of social phenomena has not yet had sufficient light thrown on it.

The decisive principle is the dialectical materialist understanding of social phenomena. Sociological analysis presupposes an all-round account of the various factors and elements of the social process. The sociologist strives to review it as a whole, in all its interdependencies, while the representatives of the various concrete social sciences (economists, lawyers, psychologists, art critics etc.) conduct social research from the standpoint of their own fields.

An account of the peculiarity of social processes and phenomena, expressed in specific categories, is one of the essential requirements of the methodology of sociological research.

In contemporary bourgeois sociology the application of methods and analogies from mathematics, cybernetics, and the natural and technical sciences to social investigations frequently leads to a slurring over of the social nature of the phenomena studied and their social specifics. Researchers often transfer the concepts and laws of the theory of automatic systems and electronic computers, and the ideas and notions of different branches of physics, biology and other natural sciences to the field of social research. While it is true that use of the methods of the natural and technical sciences and the techniques of cybernetics in many cases stimulates social ideas, as a result of which there is a mutual enrichment of the social and natural sciences, the social character of phenomena cannot be revealed by the methods of the natural sciences.

Dialectical and historical materialism are the general methodology of social research. But any particular research needs the concretisation of general principles. Success in the application of methodology depends on the totality of ways and means, including minor auxiliary methods. They ensure its fruitfulness. The knowledge and ability to apply these methods is what differentiates researchers and to a considerable extent characterises their professional skill.

It is necessary to distinguish between the general methods, i.e., the application of the principles of dialectical and historical materialism, Marxist political economy and scientific communism, and the methods of concrete research based on the general methodology. The latter, in accordance with the empirical and theoretical process of cognition, are divided into methods of collecting basic information on the empirical facts of reality, and methods of treatment and analysis of the empirical material.

How do we go about the study of any phenomenon? What do we begin with? The inexperienced researcher says he needs facts and only facts. The engineer demands the characteristic of his material, quantitatively expressed parameters, indices that he can compare and classify and evaluate the connections between. However, the thoughtful and experienced engineer knows very well that the extraction and selection of facts depends on the practical and theoretical ideas he is guided by.

Research requires as its prerequisites first a definition of its theme and aim, an exact formulation and theoretical analysis of the problem; second a clear understanding of the subject and of the practical possibilities of studying it; third a definition of the preliminary hypotheses put forward as a supposition and requiring proof in the course of research (formulated as a rule with a view to establishing some relationship or dependence of the facts and elements, inasmuch as the aim of cognition, in the last analysis, is to try to discover in social phenomena and processes new connections and interactions brought about as the result of the activity of people); fourth, and finally, one must select the technical means and methods to realise the programme of research, with an assessment of their relevance to the subject matter and tasks of the research.

The more social problems are, the more the process of dealing with them presupposes the uniting of a great many different problem groups, laboratories and institutes. Therefore organisation occupies a major portion in research, takes up much time, and requires the expenditure of energy and talent. Questions of administration, co-ordination and planning are most important methodological ones, and are determined by the character and type of the research itself.

Sociological research can also be exploratory, opening up new directions, expressing trends of development not previously known and seeking new features of phenomena. As a rule research of this type is concentrated on the qualitative aspect of processes. But there are other situations in science where the trends need to be expressed in mathematically exact relations. If the first kind is exploratory or heuristic in its intention, the second is analytical, defining

more exactly the nature and character of the quantitative use and control of social processes. It is known, for example, that the combination of material and moral work incentives is a powerful factor of social development. At present economists using mathematical methods affirm that it is necessary to find a way to account quantitatively not only for material incentives but for moral ones also, and to determine their quantitative relationship.

The Institute of Cybernetics of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences calculates that the entire apparatus concerned with the planning and administration of the Soviet economy is able annually to deal with information equivalent to approximately 10^{12} arithmetical operations. But to realise optimum management of the economy there is already a need for 10^{16} operations a year. It follows that the present management apparatus already performs 10,000 times fewer operations than are needed. By 1980 social life will be considerably more complex and the economy will expand greatly. Radical changes in the methods of analysis of social processes are required.

The problems of developing methods are not only those of the 'techniques' and 'technology' of research but also questions of the development of theoretical knowledge in the field being studied. Theory, which reveals the essence of phenomena and the pattern of their change, serves as a method of cognition of phenomena of this order. The theory of socio-economic formations and the laws of their development and change, for example, serves as a method of studying the concrete history of any people. Every theoretical proposition of dialectical and historical materialism, when applied to the study of social processes, fulfils the role of a general philosophical method.

The weakness of Soviet sociological research at present frequently springs from inattention to the theory of the problem and from lack of consideration of the initial premises of the research and of the difficulty of the theory itself.

Theoretical astuteness permits one to see much in a few facts; but one should not underestimate the significance of a quantity of observed facts—the more the necessary facts are established the fuller and more adequate and objective is the picture of the process. Without statistical analysis the sociologist is unable to achieve a serious generalisation of the facts, and without a generalisation of the facts there is no understanding.

What ways have we, besides direct observation, of bringing the facts to light? Observation uses such methods of collecting original material as questionnaires of various kinds and forms; interviews and talks with the individual or group of persons being studied, and with persons who have connections with them, with exact recording of the answers for subsequent elaboration; various kinds of human documents (the study of documents is a special field that recommends ways of primary treatment of documents—current and historical archives, for example); discussions, conferences and meetings, etc., on different questions with the workers of enterprises, collective farmers, the intelligentsia.

Finally the empirical material is collected, sorted and considered and conclusions are drawn. And the question is again posed: how reliable are the facts that have been collected? For the object and the subject of an investigation are living people; the investigators may introduce subjective elements into the study, and the sympathies and antipathies of those studied may exert an influence on the filling up of questionnaires, etc., and on the character and tone of oral communications.

We need methods of social psychology to study public opinion, views, the mood of collectives and different groups on the most varied questions of production, living and leisure. But it is necessary to limit them to investigation. That people are judged by their deeds is a trite but fundamental proposition.

'Questionnaire mania', exaggerated psychologism and the reduction of social research to the social psychological are characteristic of idealistic bour-

geois sociology. The study of social attitudes is reduced in essence to a recording of the psychological motives, feelings and opinions of people on one event or another. But it is impossible, for example, to study the working and leisure time, and the social conditions of people's use of work and living time, with only one questioning. The investigation of this problem is often limited in bourgeois countries to the collection of subjective indices.

Marxist social research, while making use of the means of psychological study of the social attitudes of people in collectives, does not limit itself to this but goes farther and records the most mass activities, the real facts of social practice, as the basis and means of social research.

Integration of the natural and social sciences requires of social investigators not only a complex study of social problems but also an improvement of their accuracy. What do we mean by 'accuracy in social research', 'precision in methods of cognition'? The saturation of research by quantitative calculation and measurement of the intensity of properties and relations; the use not only of mathematical computation but also of the methods of the theory of probability and mathematical statistics; application of contemporary symbolic logic, cybernetics and electronic computer techniques. 'Precision' is characterised not only by the quantitative but also by the qualitative and logical side of social research. Precision depends, as we have already remarked, on the theoretical formulation of the question, on strict use of 'the language of science' and its concepts, with the aid of which one may obtain a qualitative analysis of the problems, and on the application of experiment.

The precision of social research is shown in the possibility of formalising premises, problems and methods. The more science uses the arsenal of formal means of analysis the more 'precise' are its concepts, judgments and conclusions and the more significant is the general application of quantitative mathematical methods and means of computation. Under the influence of quantitative methods of 'calculating' and 'measuring' the intensity of properties and relations, knowledge of properties is deepened and new possibilities are opened up for the generalised, formalised expression of concepts and dependencies in the form of symbolically written equations—models of the real processes and phenomena.

The use of modelling helps us to discover regularities in social processes and to investigate and resolve problems of various degrees of complexity with a high degree of accuracy. One of the most important stages in the construction of models is the determination of the main characteristics of the process being studied, the recording of their internal connections, and definition of their limits. In order to examine a phenomenon we must be able to delimit it from all others. It is very important, therefore, to find those points where its connections with all other phenomena are weakest. As a result we should obtain a collection of indices that characterise it fully, or at least, to such a degree of fullness as will guarantee us the necessary accuracy and authenticity of the model.

The second stage consists in the translation of a clear, 'verbal', 'correct' formulation of the phenomenon, and of a list of all its requirements and all its characteristics, into the language of equalities and inequalities. Afterwards follows the collection and evaluation of the required information, a mathematical analysis of the model, choice of mathematical method, the working out of the algorithm for resolution of the mathematical problems obtained. Then the calculations are made by machine, and after that the authenticity of the model is again analysed. If it is unsuccessful, everything starts afresh; usually the model is arrived at by a series of approximations. Very often it turns out that a model has been constructed ignorantly and that certain factors have been

overlooked; analysis reveals which limitations have been ignored and which contradict each other.

The third stage is the realisation of the results. During this questions may arise that had not previously been considered. This will compel an improvement of the model and the working out of new methods of studying it. The construction of descriptive, qualitative models, their formalisation and mathematical analysis and the introduction of the results of the research are independent though internally related stages. At present the most successful results have been achieved in working out socio-economic models. The leading Soviet institutes are now creating one of the most complex models—a mathematical one of the Soviet economy that includes hundreds of millions of variables and millions of limits.

Mathematical methods and electronic computers are used mainly for analysis and the working up of initial data. Our experiments carried out at the computer centres of the Siberian Department of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the Estonian Academy of Sciences have shown the effectiveness of using electronic machines to work up and analyse voluminous sociological and historical data. An example is an analysis of the state of peasant farming and the stratification of the peasantry from records relating to 1,151 peasant households, all bearing the name Gagarin, in 1830-60. With the use of computers the programme was carried out in two and a half hours instead of the 1,000 hours of working time that would have been necessary by ordinary methods. Preparation of the data for the computer took the scientists fifty hours; and a further eighty-five hours of a mathematician's time was required to programme the research.*

A first attempt at co-ordinating research on the problems of educating Soviet people has been made by the Institute of Philosophy of the USSR Academy of Sciences—a major task devoted to elucidating the patterns of the spiritual life of our society. Many difficulties have cropped up in organising collective research on this theme. One is the absence of unity over certain theoretical propositions concerning the shaping of social, and in particular individual, consciousness. Yet the organisation and method of research on personality and the choice of factual material depend on the initial theoretical premises. This field has been significantly reinforced, however, since the conference of 1963 on methodological problems of science, when it was emphasised that the problem of man is the root problem of Marxist philosophy.

Great tasks confront our philosophers, economists, historians and lawyers, in collaboration with mathematicians and technologists, to investigate the most important social problems of our time. Our sociologists have taken only the first steps towards resolving them. Before them lies a broad field of activity.

Passages selected and translated by Maurice Hookham from I. G. Petrov: *Predmet i metody sotsiologicheskikh issledovaniï*, Moscow, 1964.

* See V. A. Ustinov (Novosibirsk), I. D. Kovalchenko (Moscow), S. G. Karpenko (Kemerovo), J. Kakh (Tallin): 'New Computers in the Service of History', *Istoriya SSSR*, 1964, No. 1; *Voprosy istorii*, 1964, No. 5. See also V. A. Ustinov: *The Use of Computers in Historical Research* (for analysis of voluminous historical sources), Moscow, 1964.

The Philosophy of Social Development

K. Momjian

IN RECENT YEARS the question has repeatedly been raised in Soviet publications of a need to enhance the methodological function of historical materialism in relation to social practice and to all the social sciences. Why has it been raised? Is it to be explained solely by tendencies towards empiricism and an underestimation of the meaning and significance of philosophical generalisation on the part of some social scientists?

In fact, a predilection for themes that are too shallow and too insignificant is observable among a section of research historians, economists, linguists, etc. The collection, description and classification of factual material, of course, constitutes an important element of research, but they are not exhaustive. Genuine science always presupposes broad and profound theoretical generalisation, and that, naturally, is not an easy business. It is much easier to describe phenomena than to disclose their essence and the law of their development. The situation during the cult of the personality, when every alleged or actual theoretical mistake was 'corrected', predominantly by administrative methods, was not the least factor in the withdrawal from theoretical generalisation. The withering criticism of the works of M. N. Pokrovsky, P. I. Stuchka, N. Y. Marr and many others could not but lead to a reduction of theoretical thinking in history, law, general linguistics and other social disciplines.

It is important to emphasise that breaches of the correct relation between the empirical and the rational in the process of cognition, and disregard of theoretical relations, was inevitably bound to, and did, lead to a weakening, and to an extinction among a number of researchers, of interest in methodology and in trying philosophically to understand the phenomena being studied, because empiricism by its nature excludes theoretical generalisation.

The weakening of interest in methodological questions among social scientists was also determined by the negative influence of bourgeois sociology with its characteristic depreciation or complete negation of philosophical understanding. Some came to believe that rejection of methodology, of philosophy, of ideological 'isms', would ensure exact and positive knowledge of the facts, and only the facts, in all their 'purity'.

But is that an adequate explanation? Was not the weakening of links between philosophy and the other humanities partially due to 'trouble' in historical materialism itself and to its retardation? Can it, in its present state, fully satisfy the needs of the social sciences in this era of such rich diversity of creative historical efforts by the people, of so many transitional stages and social institutions?

It would clearly be wrong to deny that historical materialism is lagging behind the march of time and behind the requirements of social life and of the humanities. At the same time it should be noted that a number of interesting monographs and textbooks on it have been published of late in the USSR, and that they are imbued with a feeling for the new and with a striving to cast off scholasticism and a dogmatic approach to the materialist understanding of history. But this process of self-criticism and self-purging is far from completed, and there are grounds for stating that signs of stagnation still exist. How do they express themselves? In the first place, in the slowness in overcoming the view that the general laws and categories of historical materialism are complete and immutable. Scholars often prefer to speak of its application to the various spheres of social life and social science, leaving the problem of the creative development of historical materialism itself in the background. Sometimes it is still looked on as a body of finished abstract and assimilated truths, while the creative

development of the social sciences is considered possible only outside the framework of the Marxist philosophy of history. Some claim that genuine creative generalisation of social practice is possible only in local sectors, within the limits of narrow programme assignments. To call a spade a spade, this is, in essence, neopositive disparagement of philosophical knowledge.

This view has given rise to the proposal that a concrete sociology should be created alongside historical materialism, with its allegedly frozen and immobile truths. We must agree with F. Konstantinov and V. Kelle in their refutation of this proposition.*

Indeed, if sociology studies not the entire sum total of social problems but the developing general sociological pattern it will coincide with historical materialism as correctly understood. Lenin was taking this into account when he emphasised that historical materialism is scientific sociology. But if sociology is understood as a science dealing with the most varied aspects of social life it is difficult to say what are the subject matter, method and meaning of such an extraordinary variegated and indefinite science. Political economy, law, philology, the historical sciences, etc., study the entire multiformity of social phenomena, so what is the point of separating the study of concrete problems of economics, labour, culture, everyday life, demography, ethnography and criminal law from their theoretical disciplines, proclaiming them sociological and uniting them under a general heading called 'concrete sociology'? Would such an approach not clearly lead to the bankruptcy of a number of social disciplines, and to their isolation from practice? Would it not be better to reinforce the existing social sciences, strengthen their links with practice, and promote the realisation of an extensive and well-planned programme of concrete investigation of contemporary social phenomena within their framework and in accordance with their methods?

No one, of course, can question the role that concrete social studies play in a penetrating, all-round cognition and transformation of social relations. More, it is now clear that this work cannot be restricted to research institutes and higher educational establishments. In present-day conditions it is difficult to imagine successful work by Party, YCL, and trade union organisations without systematically conducted, concrete social investigations that will make for leadership equipped not simply with knowledge of the affair in hand but with scientific knowledge.

Social research requires not only well-considered methods, but also a methodology that will provide the initial principles for studying social phenomena. And that is the task of historical materialism. A desire to 'rescue' it from the possibility of dogmatic and scholastic degeneration has prompted a striving to extend its limits to include social studies that are highly important in themselves but which do not tie in with its philosophical nature and purpose. We cannot understand why, as some people believe, historical materialism as a philosophical science should specially engage in the study of concrete forms of labour, socialist emulation, the raising of the scientific and technical standards of individual groups of workers, problems of free time and the organisation of everyday life. Why should historical materialism study problems that are not philosophical, however important they may be? And if it does, what is left for the other social sciences?

It seems to us that the intrusion of historical materialism into the field of the other sciences and its groundless attempt to act as a substitute for them are

* See Konstantinov and Keller: 'Historical Materialism is Marxist Sociology', *Kommunist*, 1965, No. 1, the opening article in a discussion to which Mr. Momjian's article was the second contribution.

fraught with many negative consequences. The study of problems of everyday life—of family relations, for instance, or of the cultural level of one group of the population or another—can be much more competently and skilfully carried out by ethnographers who have everything required for it—experience, aptitude, long-standing methods, and the appropriate researchers. To forestall possible objection, we would reply that theoretical generalisation is not the privilege of philosophy. No one can prove that Marxist ethnography should occupy itself solely with a description of facts without disclosing the regularities and patterns of the phenomena it studies.

Objecting to excessive broadening of the subject matter of historical materialism, and to the inclusion in it of problems whose examination would only prevent it from carrying out its own tasks more consistently and hamper a deeper treatment of the basic question of sociology (the relation of social being to social consciousness), of the most general sociological laws and of the interrelations of the various economic, political and other patterns of development as a whole, we would propose that the attention of philosophers working in this field should be concentrated solely on working out and elucidating the problems of the materialist conception of history.

A sceptical attitude towards the possibility of developing historical materialism as a philosophical science dealing with the general laws of social life has been engendered, apart from anything else, by an erroneous understanding of the relations between the general, the particular and the individual. A general law exists before it becomes the property of science, and it exists in inseparable unity with the particular and the individual. A general law is not merely the outcome of a process of abstract thought. It reflects objective relations between phenomena and processes. And naturally, if things, phenomena, connections and relations change the general law also changes. It is only in idealist and metaphysical philosophy, in particular in Plato's, that general ideas are primary and immutable categories. Dialectical materialism does not exclude the general from the stream of eternally developing reality, and this fully applies to the most general laws and categories of social development whose study is the subject matter of historical materialism.

We have to remember that historical materialism arose and took shape on the basis of a generalisation, chiefly, of the experience of class antagonistic formations. Does this not explain the major place that problems of classes and of class and national antagonism occupy in it? And is it not clear that with the beginning of the construction of a classless formation historical materialism, philosophically generalising this experience, should extend its laws and categories significantly and embark on the discovery and analysis of new sociological patterns and laws?

It is our profound conviction that the attention of Marxist philosophers of history and Marxist sociologists should be directed towards a correct philosophical generalisation of the new historical processes; a philosophical interpretation of the general trend of development of the contemporary world, and of the essence and distinguishing features of the social revolutions of the 20th century; discovery and substantiation of the characteristics of the dialectics of the rise of socialism; changes in the concept of classes, statehood, and other social phenomena. It is impossible, of course, to solve tasks of such scope with 'micro-sociological' surveys, the polling of several hundred or thousand people, although the results of such surveys are very important and provide a great deal for philosophical generalisation. These major philosophical tasks can be solved only if they are firmly based on the findings of all the other social sciences, if they analyse the main economic, political and ideological processes of our day, and if they make wide use of statistical data and statistical regularities.

It is a curious fact that bourgeois sociologists are resorting more and more frequently to the so-called theory of factors in order to overcome the imaginary 'one-sidedness' of historical materialism. Supporters of this theory reject Marxist 'economic monism' as recognising only the active significance of economic relations, while they, the champions of the 'pluralistic concept', assume that the historical process is an interaction of various autonomous factors. All this is a complete misunderstanding, to say the least. Genuine historical materialism proceeds from a recognition of the many factors that operate in history; but Marxism does not view them as 'autonomous' but in their dialectical interaction, with the decisive role played in the final analysis by economic relations. The task is to take into account far more precisely and discerningly the interconnections and interrelations of the various sociological phenomena and laws, and not to exclude the idea that the significance of one factor or another may make itself felt with different force under different historical conditions.

The overcoming of survivals of economic materialism is bound up with a better elaboration of the problem of social law, the conditions under which it operates, and the possibility that the action of different social laws may cross. It is important for us searchingly to examine Marx's tenet that laws appear in social life as tendencies. Such an understanding will facilitate a more flexible dialectical approach to social life, a greater consideration of the role of subjective factors and of various chance elements in the realisation of one law-tendency or another, and limitation of the operation of some of them and additional scope for others.

A successful struggle against vulgarisation of Marxist sociology is also linked with consideration of the role played by chance in social life. In our age of rapid growth of the role of consciousness in all fields of social phenomena the question of reducing the field of chance holds a special place. Chance has an objective basis, of course, when it is a manifestation of necessity, but can we consider any chance mistake in calculations and decisions a manifestation of necessity? We exclude such an assumption and speak of reducing the sphere of chance. The question is of special interest in a socialist society, where the law of the planned, proportional development of the economy operates, and where we have every objective possibility to reduce subjective mistakes and accidental and groundless decisions to the minimum.

We have touched above on only a few problems, but they provide an idea of how great are the tasks facing the philosophy of social development. Historical materialism can solve these problems only by utilising all the achievements of the social sciences, and constantly improving its own theory.

—Translated and abridged from *Kommunist*, 1965, No. 4.

Problems of Labour Turnover

A. Zdravomyslov, L. Blyakhman, O. Shkuratan

SOME very interesting and complex social and economic factors underlie the movement of workers from one enterprise to another.* For patterns we may single out five basic forms of labour turnover:

* This article is a popular report of an investigation of labour turnover in selected Leningrad factories undertaken by the Leningrad Public Institute for Social Research, published in the trade union newspaper *Trud (Labour)* in its feature 'The *Trud* Public Institute of Sociological Research'. We reproduce it here as a case example of the studies referred to in our preceding articles. The authors are members of the Institute's Council for Study of the Social and Political Problems of Labour, of which Dr. Zdravomyslov is chairman.

1. Demographic, which includes the retirement of elderly workers on pension; recruitment of school leavers; call-up of young men to the Soviet Army and their return to work after demobilisation. The intensity of this type of movement is due to the increasing proportion of pensioners in the population and the return of some of them to work, etc.
2. Social, which is linked with changes in the social position of working people: the increasing number of young workers leaving to study; workers completing external courses at higher educational establishments and specialised secondary schools and transferring to jobs as engineers, technicians, designers, etc. In Leningrad this type of movement constitutes over 25 per cent of total labour turnover.
3. Inter-industrial, which is connected with radical changes in the structure of production in the Soviet Union. The number of people employed in certain branches of industry is falling. At the same time the numbers working in the chemical and radio-electronic industries and in works producing machines for the light and food industries and for agriculture, and making durable consumer goods, is increasing.
4. Transfer of workers from one trade to another, which is also connected with the scientific and technical revolution taking place in the Soviet Union. In recent years the number of workers in such skilled trades as mechanics, setters-up and adjusters, electrical and radio assemblers, laboratory assistants, motor drivers and railway engine drivers has greatly increased, while at the same time the number of workers in the former mass trades like loaders, labourers, transport workers, trailer hands in agriculture and unskilled building workers has been sharply reduced.
5. Territorial, which is increasing from year to year with the development of industry in the eastern regions of the country.

Thus the turnover of labour in the Soviet Union is to a significant extent connected with patterns of social change and changes in the structure of industry.

However, there are many other elements of an unorganised and unsystematic character in the movement of workers which cause considerable losses to society.

A first set of losses arises from the expenses of retraining, which not infrequently cost 50 to 100 per cent more than the cost of training new workers. As a rule, 45 per cent of those changing their jobs also change their trades.

A second group of losses is connected with the interval between a worker's leaving his job and starting at a new enterprise. Hundreds of thousands of man hours are lost annually in Leningrad from this cause.

A third form of loss derives from reduction of output in the last days of a person's work at the old place and in the first months at the new one. According to the data of the Labour Research Institute, productivity of work is usually 25 to 30 per cent below normal in the first month, about 10 per cent in the second, while only in the fourth month do novices begin to fulfil their shift quotas.

This is why the Leningrad Public Institute of Social Research undertook an intensive study of the reasons why various groups of workers change their work and leave their places of employment.

Statistical returns on turnover of labour give no answer to the questions behind the formula 'left of his own accord'. For this study we selected twenty-five of the largest enterprises typical of Leningrad industries, and whose percentage turnover of labour is approximately the average for their industries.

As it was essential to ensure maximum reliability in replies to our questionnaire, it was decided to question not those workers who had decided to leave these works but those signing on new at them.

More sincere replies could be expected from the latter. Questionnaires were completed without recording the name of the worker. Other objective data were used as a check (entries in labour books, information about earnings, etc.).

It was also necessary to take into account the existence of seasonal fluctuations in the scale and causes of turnover; we questioned all workers newly taken on from other factories over a fairly lengthy period of five quarters. Nearly 11,000 such workers were questioned.

Much attention was paid to the organisation of the study. The Party committees at the factories set up social commissions whose work was checked by the deputy directors of the works responsible for personnel. Workers readily answered the questions put to them in the questionnaire. Nearly 1,000 assistants took part in carrying out the study, and a consultant was appointed to each factory. All the work was carried out on an unpaid social basis under the leadership of the Leningrad City Committee of the CPSU.

The method of approach was worked out by the authors of this article with the active assistance of our colleagues in the Public Institute of Social Research N. M. Tikhonov, V. G. Sochilin, V. A. Yadov and G. M. Podorov.

Analysis of the nearly 11,000 questionnaires completed by workers enabled us to establish the main motives for workers changing their places of work in various types of Leningrad enterprises. The results, as percentages of the total replies received, are summarised in the following table:

Branch of Industry	<i>Dissatisfied with the character, conditions and type of work.</i>						
	<i>Work organisa- tion</i>	<i>Working condi- tions</i>	<i>Expecta- tions of promo- tion</i>	<i>Rela- tions with other workers</i>	<i>Dissatisfaction with Housing, living condi- tions</i>	<i>Pay</i>	<i>Breaches of labour discipline</i>
Metallurgy	4.4	21.9	10.1	5.0	25.2	17.9	1.1
Metal working	5.2	18.3	11.8	3.8	25.8	19.2	1.8
Chemical	3.1	26.7	6.1	2.3	34.1	13.2	0.5
Textile	2.4	27.0	7.3	3.5	35.8	9.4	1.0
Leather and footwear.....	3.0	20.6	7.3	3.4	31.9	16.7	1.6
Food	4.0	25.5	6.8	2.3	22.7	18.4	1.4
Sewing	4.4	14.7	6.6	1.3	41.2	16.7	0.5
Building	4.2	18.6	9.9	1.7	29.9	19.3	1.0
Transport and communica- tions	3.8	19.6	11.8	1.1	24.8	16.4	2.4
Research and design	3.9	6.8	12.7	3.5	21.2	29.4	1.3
Distribution and public catering	2.6	13.1	9.5	1.8	24.1	24.7	1.1
Municipal enterprise	2.6	23.8	7.8	1.9	23.3	37.6	1.4
All workers	4.1	19.8	10.5	2.8	29.8	23.5	1.4

As can be seen from the table, all motives for changing place of work fall into three main groups: dissatisfaction with the character of work, 37.4 per cent; desire to improve housing and living conditions or to find work nearer home, 29.9 per cent; desire to improve pay, 23.5 per cent. These summarised results convincingly refute the view still current in some places that turnover is money-grubbing—'a search for a fast buck'. A high percentage of labour turnover because of low wages (31-48 per cent) was observed only among workers earning under 60 roubles a month, and even here it should be realised that dissatisfaction with wages is also often linked with bad labour organisation retarding growth of earnings by pieceworkers.

In a socialist state the worker enters into labour relations not with society directly but with an enterprise. Consequently, working conditions, pay levels and a degree of satisfaction with cultural and living conditions depend not only upon the general progress of the country and the personal labour contribution of each worker but also upon how the management and the social organisations of the enterprise or town organise the collective labour of people, and upon how effectively the means of production are utilised.

It is therefore no accident that turnover at similar and neighbouring enterprises varies greatly. Thus at the Forward Plant in the Vasily Island district of Leningrad, for example, it is twice as high as at the neighbouring Kozitsky Works. At such Leningrad factories as the 22nd Congress Metal Works, the Printing Machinery Works, the Electric Force Works, the State Optical Engineering Works (GOMZ), the Baltic Shipyard, the Electrical Apparatus Works and the Zhelyabov Factory 95 per cent of the workers questioned declared that they had found the answers to all the problems that had led them to quit their previous places of employment; but at the Sverdlov and the Pneumatic Automatic Machinery Works and the Volodarsky and Quickstep Factories 13 to 20 per cent of those questioned declared that they were thinking of looking for another job.

In order to suggest measures to reduce turnover the investigators had to elucidate the motives for quitting work of different groups of workers. Mathematical analysis showed that workers in the engineering and metalworking industries had most complaints about organisation of labour (5.2 per cent against an average of 2.4 per cent). Working conditions and recreation facilities are particularly unsatisfactory in the textile and food industries, where female labour is widely used and where there is the most night work. This was the reason for leaving in the case of 25 to 27 per cent of the workers.

Some conclusions came as a surprise to us. Thus violators of labour discipline, who had been compelled to change their places of work for that reason, were most frequent among workers of the sixth category.* This disturbing conclusion indicated that high skill in a worker does not absolve social organisations from concern to raise his ideological and political level, and cannot protect this category of worker from criticism by workmates.

The conclusions from the host of tables (a total of some 150 were compiled) enabled us to make concrete recommendations to economic bodies. Thus it appeared that the pay of third-category fitters and turners, fifth-category shoemakers and leatherworkers and first- and second-category chemical workers was clearly unsatisfactory. The proportion of these workers dissatisfied with their pay appeared to be two to three times higher than the average. It also turned out that prospects of raising their qualifications appear most urgent to workers at the end of their first year of employment. This means that the worker particularly needs the support of the management and social organisations at just this time.

The comparative data on the reasons for changing work of workers who are studying and those who are not studying are interesting. Thus the absence of prospects of advancement took first place (26 per cent) among worker-students of evening secondary and higher technical institutes, but fifth place among workers who are not studying (7.9 per cent). At the same time the latter were much more concerned about pay (22 per cent compared with 12 per cent). The proportion among student-workers discharged for breaches of discipline was only a fifth that among non-students. On the other hand, the proportion of students dissatisfied with their relations with management and therefore leaving their jobs was rather higher (3.9 and 2.4 per cent). Educated, intelligent workers

* In most Soviet industries there are six to eight pay categories, based on skill, the first being the lowest.

are the gold reserve of our industry. Particular attention needs to be given to satisfying their spiritual needs.

The materials of the investigation convincingly demonstrate that the unsatisfactory character of work is a main cause of changing place of work, especially with highly skilled and educated workers. In statistical order the incidence of these causes among male workers is as follows: work not corresponding to qualifications (5.5 per cent); physically heavy labour (4.6 per cent); hold-ups and other interruptions of production (4 per cent); work not to inclinations (3.5 per cent); dirty work (3.2 per cent); night shifts (3.2 per cent); no facilities for study (3.1 per cent); no prospects of raising their category (2.9 per cent); harmful working conditions (2.6 per cent); overtime and 'storm' working (2.5 per cent); bad relations with charge hand, rate fixer or foreman (3.6 per cent).

Among workers taking part in the movement for communist labour, demands for the creation of conditions for work and study were most frequent. Thus the number of members of communist work brigades leaving their jobs because of storm tactics was four times as great as among workers not taking part in this movement, because of absence of facilities for study twice as high, and because of absence of prospects for improving their skill 50 per cent more.

But violaters of labour discipline and people citing low pay and distance from their home, etc., as their main reason for changing their places of work were only half as high among members of the communist movement. Hence the conclusion may be drawn that complaints about organisation and working conditions and desire for work corresponding to one's inclinations arise as a rule from the working man's growing feeling of responsibility for the content and results of his work.

In the period since the investigation much has been done in Leningrad factories to satisfy the increasing demands of the workers. The personnel departments of our factories had limited themselves for a long time to taking on workers and releasing them. In a number of works social (unpaid voluntary) personnel departments have been set up to help them. These new bodies check how jobs are selected for new workers, how workers raise their qualifications, what jobs are assigned to them and how bonuses are distributed.

Every application to leave work is now examined preliminarily by the social department, and often the causes of dissatisfaction are easily remedied: a machine repaired in time, work slips correctly made out, a frank chat with the foreman—and the worker stays at the works. In the Bolshevik, GOMZ and Svetlana Works, where social departments are working particularly successfully, labour turnover is the lowest in Leningrad.

An effective means of combating labour turnover is deep study of all operations of the production process and the drawing up of plans to eliminate heavy, monotonous and unattractive operations. Studies carried out by labour physiologists at the Quickstep Factory and Red Triangle Mills have shown that monotony of work on the conveyor can be reduced essentially by alternation of operations, changes of rhythm of the movement of the conveyor at different times of the day, and training workers for an allied trade.

It is quite evident that improvement of working conditions not only makes workers' labour easier but also produces an enormous economic effect by reducing turnover of labour.

Our results showed that although women are a minority of the workers in Leningrad factories nearly three-quarters of the whole loss of working time through labour turnover is due to them. Among the 11,000 workers interviewed 41.6 per cent were married women. A special table convincingly showed that most women leave work in the second quarter of the year, in the spring, when they need to take their children to a country cottage or out of town.

Sixty per cent of the women changing their places of work left for two reasons only: unsatisfactory conditions for work and leisure (night shifts, heavy and dirty work), and housing and living conditions (impossibility of getting children into a kindergarten or crèche, distance from home to work); and for these same reasons 130,000 Leningrad women of working age do not work.

Economic calculations indicate that the expenditure on building children's institutions fully to satisfy the need for them would be recouped in less than two years from savings due to reduction in the movement of labour. In the allocation of housing the Executive Committee of the Leningrad City Council has given great attention, in accordance with the recommendations of our Public Institute, to the places of work of the new tenants, and has organised a number of fast bus routes from new housing estates to the largest factories in the same districts.

To reduce labour turnover among women the introduction of new shift times that reduce the number of night shifts to the minimum has great significance. In the textile mills, where new shift times have been introduced, the numbers quitting work have been reduced by 10-15 per cent.

Trade union bodies are now giving much more attention to specific factors in selecting work for women. However, a radical solution of this problem, in our view, would be possible only if women were given the opportunity to work half shifts with pro-rata pay.

Study of the causes and motives for changing work places of different age groups of workers enabled us to establish with considerable accuracy that prospects of advancement play a particularly great role in choice of work place among young people under twenty-five, while working conditions and leisure particularly affect people over forty (23 per cent of those interviewed), housing and living conditions those between twenty-one and thirty (when they are starting a family), and pay people over fifty (apparently connected with a desire to obtain a higher pension).

Data on the popularity of one profession or another with people of different ages and education present great interest. Thus with workers with up to four years' education* the most popular trades are foundry workers, shoemaker, leather worker and labourer. The majority of workers with elementary education who changed their places of work kept to these trades.

With those who had completed five to six classes at school the trades of fitter, machine operator, chemical worker, textile worker and building worker were particularly popular; while for young people with more than seven years' education a fall in interest in the trades of labourer, foundry worker and builder is characteristic, with a growth of interest in fitting and assembly work.

Electrical and radio assembly work was the only trade that held its own with more than half the workers with secondary or incomplete higher education.

* Four-year (elementary) education only became compulsory in the USSR in 1930. Town dwellers with less than this amount of education were predominantly (according to the 1959 census) in the age group over forty-five (i.e. now over fifty years of age). The following table shows the 1959 figures for men:

<i>Year of birth</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>No. per 1,000</i>
1935-9	20-24	26
1930-34	25-29	50
1925-29	30-34	43
1920-24	35-39	57
1915-19	40-44	113
1910-14	45-49	238
1905-09	50-54	305
1900-04	55-59	353

Workers with elementary education who changed to the trade of machine operator were most frequently labourers, but also transferees from textile mills and boot-and-shoe factories. Not a single worker in this group became a fitter or an assembly worker.

All this enables us to draw at least two conclusions. First, the main problem with young workers is to give them the opportunity to combine work and study. In those Leningrad works where shift study has been organised in schools and technical colleges turnover among youth is much below the average; and where this is not done, as for example at the Baltic Shipyard, young workers quit for any kind of auxiliary work, sometimes even losing pay, only so as to work one shift and continue their studies at educational establishments. Second, in taking on workers it is very important to acquaint young people with the character of their future work.

In addition our research showed that the area of possible work for people with an elementary education is contracting every year. Meanwhile 70 per cent of the workers in the factories studied who had elementary education did not study anywhere. Unless they raise their educational standard it will be difficult in a few years for them to find work. This circumstance must have attention focused on it by the social organisations of enterprises.

Our results showed that the search for higher pay is by no means a major cause of labour turnover. Of the workers questioned by us, 2,839 changed their places of work in spite of losing pay by doing so; 4,242 remained at the same pay level as before; and with only 4,545 was pay increased. Thus more than half the workers transferring to new places knew in advance that they would not profit materially. These data are convincing evidence that interesting work, good working conditions and an opportunity to study are of major importance to people in changing their place of work.

At the same time anomalies in rates of pay, especially between main and auxiliary shops, are an additional cause of movement of workers. Study of the role of pay in changing places of work warrants the following conclusions. It is necessary to pay particular heed to organisation of the work of lower-paid categories of workers. Ninety-five per cent of those who had received less than forty roubles a month at their old places of work began to earn more through changing their jobs. In the forty-to-sixty rouble bracket the corresponding figure was 70.5 per cent. Around 40 per cent of the low-paid workers began to earn more than eighty roubles at their new places of work; consequently their low pay at their former places of work was due not to their lack of skill but to lack of suitable work, and chiefly to bad organisation of labour.

There are still anomalies in conditions of pay between main and auxiliary shops (including the experimental workshops of research institutes). Thus 95 per cent of workers earning 100-120 roubles a month obtained increased pay by transferring from main shops to auxiliary ones; 20 per cent of workers earning under sixty roubles got 50 per cent more, while 4 per cent got 100 per cent more through transferring to auxiliary shops.

It is also necessary to remove anomalies in the rates of pay at different enterprises. Only 45 per cent of workers kept their former job categories when changing their places of work. Thus, 26 per cent of first-category workers received third- or fourth-category rating at the new places of work.

Supplementary payments should be introduced for jobs with technically based quotas and for unattractive trades. In 1962 the average percentage fulfilment of quotas for fitters, electrical and radio assembly workers and assembly workers in Leningrad engineering works was nearly 20 per cent higher than that of machine operators. In 1963-4 the Department of Labour and Wages of the Leningrad Economic Council introduced bonus payments for the majority of machine-operating jobs with substantiated quotas. This immediately reduced turnover sharply.

We are not pioneers in organising the study of socio-economic problems of labour. Similar studies have been carried out by scientists in Moscow, Sverdlovsk and Novosibirsk, and by the Central Statistical Administration of the USSR in a number of areas of the country. Experience indicates that there is much that is specific to various cities and economic districts in the scale and causes of labour turnover. Therefore, to give concrete help to local Party, trade union and economic organs, such sociological studies need in our view to be carried out in each economic area. Taking into account the experience gained from the studies that have been made, it seems that this should not be difficult to do. The main thing is for our research to be really useful to our cause.

—*Trud*, Dec. 2, 1964.

Translated by *Novosti*.

A STUDENT IN MOSCOW

Sarah White

TEN MONTHS in Moscow, studying and living as any Russian student—this was my life last year. I lived in the Moscow University building on the top of the Lenin Hills, together with thousands of other students from all over the world. (There is actually a much wider selection of foreign students than in Britain, as there is no Commonwealth bias.) The building is enormous, and dominates the whole surrounding area. I remember how deceptively near the main tower always seemed; it was clearly visible from our faculty building, which was a twenty-minute tram ride away. There were stories about new students coming to Moscow for the first time; they took the bus from the centre of town out to the university and got off as soon as they saw the tower, thinking they had arrived. Usually a good hour's walk lay before them!

The size of the university was both exciting and oppressive. The concept of 12,000 students living together in what is virtually a small independent town is thrilling. All amenities are there, from shops, restaurants, laundries and cobblers to concerts, film shows, dances and meetings. However, the very fact of living in a fairly confined space with so many other people became very tiring. Shopping was always a big chore. The shops were at hand, but to get to them you had to struggle through a crowd of people—in the lift, in the corridors and in the shops themselves. And in the snack bars and refectories it was much the same story.

The university building is divided into zones in which either men or women students live. I lived in a single room on a floor where there were a number of other foreign girls plus Soviet postgraduates studying history. The various floors of each zone tend to be allocated to a specific subject, so that students find themselves living and working together. Single rooms are given to postgraduates and to some students in the last years of their course. The Soviet postgraduates were older than us foreigners. Very few people carry on research in the Soviet Union immediately after graduating, as in this country. Most work for a few years and then return to the university to get their higher degrees. On our floor there were mothers, and grandmothers, from all over—Vladivostok, Siberia, Tashkent, the Ukraine. Many had their children, or grandchildren, with them in their rooms.

Each floor is divided into blocs, containing two rooms (not always single ones), a shower-cum-wash room, a lavatory and a small hall. The single rooms were small but very well equipped. Each had ample cupboard space, a bed, two tables, chairs and a large bookcase; in addition we were provided with a radio and kettle. Fresh linen was issued every ten days. The rooms were centrally heated and, of course, had double windows, which helped to keep out the draughts and proved a very efficient refrigerator in winter. All this was provided for a few roubles a month (about 30/-).

In my wing there were two kitchens and a small lounge on each floor. In other parts there might be more kitchens and a large lounge, shared between two floors. There were two television sets among the nine floors of our zone.

Each floor had two telephones on the landing near the lifts. We had a rota system whereby every student living on the floor had to be on duty once a month for half a day—either from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. or from 4 p.m. to midnight. The person on duty sat at a desk by the phones and answered all the calls coming in. There was a switchboard system by which people were called from their rooms to take calls. In the evening the two people who had been on duty

during the day cleaned up the kitchens. In this way we used the kitchens every day and did our share of the cleaning once a month.

The organisation of such duties is dealt with by the Soviet—a small committee elected by the students of the floor. It has five or six members ; I found myself a member as the representative of the foreign students. On the whole our duties were not very arduous. We were meant to organise cultural activities like visits to the theatre and cinema, parties to celebrate Russian *prazdniks*, etc. At the beginning of the year we had a very zealous *starosta* (or convener), who was determined that we should win the prize for the cleanest and most beautiful floor of the whole university. As the duties of the Soviet included periodic inspection of rooms to see they were kept clean, I found myself being forced to go on frequent rounds in search of dust on the tops of cupboards, radiators, doors and shelves. Although we won the award everyone was driven mad by this fanatical approach, and we soon replaced our *starosta* by a less hygienic and prize-minded student !

Life in Moscow University was very sociable, and, apart from the organised cultural activities in the student club, very informal : visits, chats, cups of coffee, and parties to celebrate various holidays.

Sport forms an important part of Soviet student life. General propaganda lays great stress on the all-round development of a person, in both body and mind. In the morning all the year round there are crowds of people rushing across the sports field in track suits for half an hour's limbering up before the day's work. I even found myself getting up at 6.30 a.m. for a whole fortnight in order to play badminton, which has become a very popular game in summer. (People do not bother about courts, nets or rules, but, as on the Continent, just play on any spare patch of ground ; the university courtyard was always full of flying shuttlecocks.) Most Muscovites try to get out of town on Sundays. The city is surrounded by beautiful wooded country, much of it silver birch, which is now imprinted on my mind as the typical Russian tree. Even out there in the woods there would be badminton players—in a clearing, on the paths, or on any stretch of open ground.

In winter the main sports are skiing and skating. The skiing is mainly cross-country trekking, as the countryside is very flat. This type of skiing suited me very well, as it is much easier than learning to negotiate mountain slopes. Every Sunday the whole of Moscow seemed to crowd on to the suburban electric trains with their skis and make for the woods—everyone from the youngest of the family to grandmother. One Sunday I joined this exodus with a couple of friends. We left early in the morning and arrived at a small station, consisting solely of a wooden platform and a hut. Through the trees we could see a number of *dachas*, or weekend country cottages. We set off in the opposite direction through the forest. The skiing was like going for a slow run, a very rhythmic movement. The woods were beautiful and very still. Suddenly we came to a clearing where there was a small ravine. Any slope, however small, is a gold-mine ; this was no exception, and was crowded with skiers of all shapes and sizes swooping down the sides. We stayed out for five or six hours before returning to the city, where I had a late dinner and collapsed, exhausted, into bed. My muscles did not recover from that outing for quite some time.

I found skating more convenient. There was an outdoor rink beside the university which was floodlit in the evening and had “ pop ” music blaring over the loudspeakers. We could borrow skates free on production of our student card (the same applied to skis). It was pleasant to skate there, but the real novelty was Gorky Park. This is a large park in the centre of Moscow rather on the lines of London's Battersea Park, with amusements and open-air theatres and concerts in summer. In winter they flood practically the whole

place. Instead of going for a stroll down the alleyways one goes for a skate—beside the Moscow river, through the trees, round the squares, stopping off for a hot drink at one of the innumerable little kiosks.

There were thirty students on my course, all invited by the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship through societies in their own countries, as I had been through the SCR. The largest national group came from India (six), but usually there were not more than two from each country. The geographical compass was large—from Australia and Japan, through Afghanistan, Cyprus, and various countries of Europe, to Latin America and the United States. The course was intended specifically for teachers of Russian for foreigners. However, the students represented a wide range of interests and stages of ability. Some had begun learning Russian only a few months earlier at classes organised by the societies in their countries; others, like myself, had been through university or were studying at one; in addition there were two girls whose parents were Russian and who could speak the language very well but had never studied it properly, nor Russian literature nor history.

Our working day was from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., five days a week. Wednesdays we had off for excursions organised by Friendship House, and Sundays were a holiday. The working day was divided between general lectures and group practical work. At the beginning of the year stress was laid on the latter with the aim of getting us speaking Russian as quickly as possible. At that time we had lectures for two hours only every day on history and grammar. Later in the year the number of lectures increased enormously to cover Soviet literature, geography, and, in addition, teaching method. The teaching method lectures were given by a number of teachers with different views, which made them stimulating. Towards the end of the year we had a few hours' teaching practice to try out all the theory we had been assimilating.

Study of Russian literature went on all the time as part of our practical work, for which we were divided into small groups of four or five. I had three students with me: a Japanese girl who had already finished university and was now working on a thesis on Dostoevsky as well as teaching Russian in a school in Tokio; an Austrian boy still at Vienna University; and a boy from Marseilles. We had all studied a certain amount of Russian literature before, and so had time to follow our own particular interests. Most of the work in our group took the form of conversation—we had to tell about what we had been doing, or talk about some topic that specially interested us, the literature that we had just read, etc. We did a little systematic training in phonetics and accent, using a tape recorder, but this never got very well organized in our group; our teacher seemed to lay more stress on spontaneous and informal conversation.

The work was hard, and I felt rather as though I had returned to school after the free-and-easy attitude of an English university arts department. However, we had the time and opportunity to participate in the cultural life of Moscow. The theatre system is very different from ours. Every theatre plays in repertory, with four or five plays in any one week. With two dozen theatres this means that one had a choice of over 100 different plays. Tickets can be bought at kiosks all over the town, in the Metro and on the streets, as well as from the theatres themselves. Tickets are also bought and sold by individuals outside the theatre immediately prior to the performance—all strictly non-black-market, with tickets going at their normal prices. If it is a popular show you are practically certain of being able to sell off any spare tickets you may have; and if you want to go there is always a chance that you may pick up a ticket.

While I was in Moscow there was a great vogue for the plays of Brecht. I saw several good performances—*Mother Courage*, *the Caucasian Chalk Circle*,

and a student performance of *The Good Woman of Szechuan*. The last was especially interesting ; it had been produced by the students of a drama institute as their graduation work, and was such a success that it was transferred to a commercial theatre, where it played to packed houses. The production was striking, with simple sets and costumes, music composed by the students themselves, and the introduction of much stylised movement. It was not surprising that Brecht was so popular ; all the modern Soviet plays I saw were a good evening's entertainment, but nothing more. None had the thought-provoking ideas and production techniques which are present in all Brecht's plays.

I managed to get to an exciting evening of poetry by Robert Rozhdestvensky, one of the leading younger Soviet poets. This is a very popular form of entertainment ; Yevtushenko gave readings in a packed Palace of Sport. Mayakovsky always maintained that poetry should be heard and not just read, that the sound and rhythm are an integral part of the poem. Rozhdestvensky is regarded as the Mayakovsky of the younger generation ; I was surprised, therefore, to find what a shy, retiring person he is—speaking with a stammer, though this disappears when he reads his own verse. Most of the poetry he read that evening was about his trip to the United States, which he had visited in the autumn of 1963. The assassination of President Kennedy—which had occurred when he was in the USA—shocked him, as it shocked all Russians, enormously. I remember the evening when we heard the news ; some of the women on our floor were practically in tears. They were very upset from the human aspect, feeling great sympathy for Jacqueline Kennedy and her children ; and then there was also the political side—they always remember that it was under Kennedy that the Moscow Test Ban Treaty was signed.

I did not meet many Soviet students who were deeply interested in politics, though many felt great sympathy for and solidarity with the people of under-developed countries. At the time of the hurricane disaster in Cuba, in the autumn of 1963, the Komsomol organised voluntary help. Every Sunday for a month groups of students of all nationalities were driven out to the airport, where they did various needed unskilled jobs ; the money they earned was used to buy goods for Cuban relief. There is, of course, a small number of very politically minded students—as anywhere in the world. Some would sit up all night in heated arguments about their government's agricultural policies. They questioned what they read in the papers and heard over the wireless, not in a cynical or negative way but in an attempt to find reality.

The Soviet Union is a country of change and progress. This movement forward struck me forcibly in contrast with life in Britain. There are, of course, many paradoxes. The sophisticated industrialised life is still very young. Moscow is full of old peasant women carrying enormous sacks of vegetables to the collective farm markets. In the luxurious marble Metro push-and-shove is still the order of the day. Shops are hung with slogans about the virtues of Communist man, but shop assistants treat you like dirt. Yet life is moving, and progress can be seen everywhere. If I were a Soviet student I would want to go east to the pulse of the country, where enormous dams and industrial complexes are being built. They are the first step to the exploitation of fabulously rich regions, and hold the key to the future.

A MAJOR ECONOMIC PROBLEM

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IN recent years the USSR has made great advances in the chemical, electronic and engineering industries. The plan for 1964 was successfully completed; this year the national income used for consumption and accumulation will be 8 per cent more than last year, while gross industrial output will be 8.1 per cent more.

These are all fresh manifestations of the advantages of socialist planning. However, while emphasising these advantages, we realise that it commands vast reserves which, if rationally used, would give it new strength to increase the rates of growth in both production and the people's standard of living. To this end it is above all essential to raise the quality of planning and economic management. The economic difficulties that are manifesting themselves in several areas, such as an inadequate rate of advance in some branches of industry, temporary disparities in their development, and complications in sales and supply, all derive from one common cause—the incongruity between the organisational level of management and the level of development reached by the productive forces.

At present we have new economic conditions calling for new economic solutions. The acute shortages we previously had are disappearing. The need to revise the range of goods produced and to improve quality is growing more and more urgent. The 'theory' of production at all costs is becoming past history. On the basis of a tremendous growth in the number of enterprises and of changes in their territorial distribution, stable, direct contacts are being established between consumer and manufacturer. Enterprises have become financially and economically stronger and are in no need of petty tutelage and regimentation.

In these conditions old forms of management and planning must be replaced by new ones—and the more quickly they are replaced the more rapidly we shall advance.



ARTICLES published of late in the central press contain many valuable proposals for improving such economic levers as the system of material incentives for workers, consolidation of the principles of cost accounting in enterprises and the granting of broader rights to them, planned price-formation, financing and credit, the extension of direct factory-to-factory ties, the consolidation of contacts between industry and its consumers, etc.

Taken separately, none of these levers is as yet capable of resolving the problem of mustering all our resources, but taken together they may be systematised to stimulate mass initiative to carry out the assignments of the state plan.

A system of planned optimum production-stimulating prices, for example, would be pointless in the case of enterprises getting plans formulated according to the old indices. The development of an economically optimum system for road transport of freight will be ineffective where the wages paid to drivers and garage engineers and mechanics are reckoned in the old way, on the basis of ton-kilometres. Consequently, proposals to improve and apply one economic lever or another more widely should be examined *in toto*; it is not only the effect of each lever but their interplay that must be studied in full detail.

Able application of the whole system of levers will unquestionably yield large-scale results for the economy, but it is not enough; it must be supple-

mented by something else—improvement of the quality of planning and centralised management.

Excessive detail in plan assignments and regimentation all along the line are evils causing irrational expenditure and hampering the adoption of efficient, flexible and progressive decisions. They came in when material incentives were relegated to a secondary importance, and they will inevitably disappear when the importance of the incentive system is increased. However, it is essential for large, specialised, modern enterprises catering for the entire national market and even for the world market to have estimation of demand and distribution of orders centralised, because otherwise we shall be unable to arrange rational direct contacts and ensure priority satisfaction of the needs of key branches of industry.

We must improve, not weaken, centralised planning, because only then can we secure optimum rates of advance in the leading branches, strike a balance in proportions, redistribute capital investments, establish the correct and proper ratio between accumulation and consumption and between private and public consumption, and shape a proper price and wages policy.

The economic levers mentioned above are conducive to workers' fulfilment of plan assignments. The question of whether their work is fully used to advance the economy and the welfare of the population, or whether some of it is wasted, depends wholly on whether the economic plan is the optimum one for the given level of development of the productive forces.

These two problems, that of applying economic levers and methods of stimulation on the one hand and that of organising optimum planning on the other, are inseparable. They must not be separated or set in opposition to one another.

Urgent measures to eliminate shortcomings in the organisation of management must be taken at once. It is very important, though, not to have a repetition of the past and not to confine ourselves to half-measures. In the effort to improve the system of economic planning and management consistently we need the prospects to be as clearly defined as they are in the field of economic development. We can already formulate them to institute a unified system of mathematical methods applied to economics—an aim quite attainable in our conditions.

There are three cardinal, integral elements of a unified automated system for optimum management and planning: an interconnected set of models of economic processes and phenomena; a unified system of economic information; and a unified state-run network of computer centres.

The system of mathematical methods applied to economics—the front-rank trend in this science—has developed on the basis of a fusion of the achievements of economics, mathematics, cybernetics and electronic computers. Study of objective economic regularities has brought about the creation of mathematical models providing a clear-cut, laconic description of the technological and economic links of the economy. With the aid of these models, which are exact descriptions of thoroughly studied phenomena, planners are able to adopt well-founded decisions based on multiple-variant calculations, take complex economic interconnections into consideration, and examine the future consequences of every economic undertaking or scientific and technical discovery.

Mathematical modelling is the main prerequisite for the broad application of computers in the national economy. But computers cannot operate on vague verbal descriptions and need clear-cut mathematical formulation of problems. Only then can they be used to make calculations in a few minutes that formerly would have taken years.

For scientific planning and management we need mathematical models of the activity of enterprises and their groupings, industries, regions, republics

and the whole country. Such models have to be thoroughly dovetailed.

Such well-tested models as the inter-branch balance make it possible to draw up completely balanced development plans with due account of the most complicated inter-branch relations. They are already used with much practical effect by planning agencies. However, a plan that is merely balanced is no longer satisfactory today. In each particular case we must look for and find the optimum, the best possible, solution—the maximum utilisation of production capacities, the most favourable inter-branch proportions and variants of the distribution of production forces and freight traffic, the most effective investment policy.

Mathematical methods, including programming, make it possible to obtain rapid optimum solutions of every concrete planning problem arising in economic management. The methods of optimum planning and management must be applied to the economy as a whole and to its every section—enterprise, industry, republic.

The working out of a system of interconnected models and the mathematical means for processing them, and the optimum solution of planning problems is one of the most important tasks now facing Soviet economics.

However, the model offers only a theoretical solution of the problem, whose content is defined by concrete data regarding capacities and resources, volume of output, distribution and consumption. According to current ideas any management process is, in a way, a process of handling information. The quality of the plan and the correctness and effectiveness of instructions depend on the correctness, feasibility and timeliness of the information used to work out plans and decisions.

Management requires the handling of vast amounts of economic information that cannot be squeezed into the traditional forms evolved historically from the management methods of the pre-computer age. The drawing up of a system of planning is a top-priority task in the broad range of problems involved in improving management and planning. This field reveals acute conflicts between the requirements of exact current management and planning and outdated forms of document treatment and communication. Present-day statistical information clearly does not meet the new requirements.

The present organisation of documentation and treatment of documents precludes efficient use of computers, since the preparation of input data takes more time and means than manual calculations. So a sweeping rationalisation of the economic information system is indispensable for efficient computerisation.

Improvement of the information system should begin right in the production sections, shops and enterprises to cover planning and management at every level. The system should be comprehensive, uniform and integrated, which presupposes uniformity of all types of information—production, economic, accounting, financial and supply. A uniform automated system of information will drastically reduce the amount of accounting work, while increasing greatly the efficiency with which information may be used. Millions of workers will be relieved of the unproductive and boring work of endless document copying and released for creative efforts.

A single state network of computer centres should become the technical basis for a single automated system of optimum management and planning. Under the conditions of the highly developed, complicated and rapidly growing economy of the Soviet Union the introduction of electronic computers is vital for effective development. The amount of information to be transmitted and processed and the complexity of multi-variant plan calculations are such that at present even the great number of employees in the management sphere are unable to carry out their tasks efficiently without modern computers.

The use of mathematical methods and computers is an important sector of the economic competition between socialism and capitalism. It should be borne in mind that the United States alone now has about 18,000 computers and systems, with almost 80 per cent of their operation time spent on economic calculations and the processing of economic information. In view of the fact that the volume of economic work increases at a rate double that of the increase of the number of enterprises and the total output of the economy, even 100,000,000 people employed in the management sphere would be unable by 1980 to handle all the incoming information using manual computing methods. Optimum management of the Soviet economy can be achieved only through the universal introduction of electronic computers and systems.

It appears possible in the conditions of planned socialist economy to catch up quickly by a concentrated effort with the capitalist countries and outstrip them in effective economic use of computers. In the capitalist countries computers are introduced as part of inter-monopoly competition, while this powerful machinery is used inefficiently on a national scale. We can carry out comprehensive automation of planning calculations on a national scale with many fewer computers and with far higher efficiency. In a planned economy it appears possible to design and build a single state network of computing centres that would be a complex of centres of various sizes equipped with modern computers, and interacting through a single automated communication system. The network would be collecting, transmitting and processing all the planning and accounting information, calculating optimum plans for individual branches, republics, production associations, transport and financial agencies. The single network would incorporate several steps, each catering for the needs of the planning organisations of the given level. It would rely on the automated and mechanised systems of information and management of enterprises that are already being set up in various parts of the country.

The development of a management system rationally combining centralised planning and management with broad use of economic levers and equipped at the most up-to-date technical standards is a task unusual even by Soviet standards in its significance and complexity. It presupposes the working out of a tested system of economic measures, the creation of a new cybernetics industry, a tremendous advance in a number of sciences and the development of quite new branches of science. But though extremely complex it is quite feasible.

Much has already been done to introduce scientific methods into the practice of management and planning. Scores of Soviet enterprises are employing computers for planning calculations. Automatic data-processing systems are now being set up in a number of economic councils. Definite progress has been made in the field of drawing up inter-branch balance sheets and solving individual optimum tasks in individual sectors of the economy, and in the organisation and management of construction. A number of research institutes, such as the Central Institute of Economics and Mathematics of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the Central Management Techniques Institute, and the Institute of Cybernetics of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, have worked out certain types of mathematical economic models and methods of solving production planning problems, the essentials of economic information theory, and methods of designing automated management systems. The universal introduction of the methods and models already tested is saving millions of roubles of additional investment, but the level of research is not yet up to the problems facing us.

The designing of a single automated planning and management system on the basis of a single system of computer centres will require large capital investments. It is also necessary to organise large-scale training of personnel, and to expand the network of scientific and technical firms and designing institutes.

All the expenditure involved will promptly justify itself and yield tremendous economic results.

It would be expedient to get down to this without delay. It will have to be carried out stage by stage, but even in the formative period it would yield results making up by a wide margin for all the expense involved. The advantage of the planned economy is that this system can be set up on a single centralised basis. The state body in charge of carrying it out should be given all the necessary plenary powers.

Pravda, January 17, 1965. Abridged.

Needed—a Scientific Approach to Economic Problems

A SCIENTIFIC approach to economic problems in the interests of the whole of society is an inseparable feature of socialism. The Party is determined to achieve a situation where all our planning and economic activity is based on a solid foundation of objective estimates and exact information, on correct utilisation of the economic laws of socialism and of economic achievements. Time and again events have shown that when there is a subjective approach instead of a scientific one, and arbitrary decisions are taken, setbacks and mistakes are bound to follow. A scientific approach is needed in solving every economic problem and every economic and organisational task.

There must be more and more consistent implementation of the scientific approach to economics in practice, at all levels of planning and management. This means that in drawing up plans and taking management decisions we must be guided by the requirements of economic laws and by exact objective data on the state of economy, take the actual possibilities and prospects into account, apply advanced practical experience and the latest scientific and technical achievements, and ensure that social production develops along the most progressive lines. All this can be done only if specialists, researchers, innovators, worker-inventors and all others concerned with production take an active part in drafting the decisions and fulfilling them. In order to stimulate creative initiative we must put economic levers into motion and provide group and individual incentives, so that everyone is interested in carrying out the tasks in the best possible way. There must be a constant creative quest for the best organisational forms and methods of planning and managing social production. The widest possible sections of the population must be drawn into taking a direct part in solving fundamental tasks of production and management.

A scientific approach to management requires, first and foremost, appropriate cadres of scientists and engineers. It also requires that the population, primarily the labour force, should have a definite educational and cultural standard. All this was more or less impossible in the early years of Soviet power. Lenin nevertheless maintained at the time that a socialist economy could only, and should only, be built on the basis of science. He saw a partial way out at first, in hiring bourgeois specialists for the practical jobs, although there were very few such specialists. Today the situation is quite different; we have a vast and steadily growing number of well-trained, experienced specialists and researchers in all fields. The educational and cultural level of the population and the scale on which vocational training is provided can in no way be compared with the situation before the Revolution.

By the end of 1963 50 per cent of the working population had either a secondary or a higher education. This included about 44 per cent of the industrial workers, 26 per cent of the collective farmers, and 92 per cent of the specialists and clerical workers. The transition to compulsory eight-year education for

the younger generation has been completed. A large-scale system for the training of skilled workers is in operation. The proportion of skilled and highly skilled workers has risen from 18.5 per cent in 1925 to 51.7 per cent in 1959. More than twice as many engineers are employed as in the United States; and we had a total of 566,000 scientific workers at the end of 1963.

These cadres represent a great constructive force. A correct scientific approach consists firstly in placing them intelligently, organising their work well, and making full use of their knowledge, experience and energy in practice. However, our cadres do not always have conditions enabling them to work with maximum efficiency. In some planning and economic organisations the scientific approach is replaced by naked administrative direction. Administration is necessary; without it management bodies would be unable to operate. The trouble is that we still have managers who evidently think that administrative power is all they need to manage production. They get carried away by 'administrative direction' and are often under the delusion that all questions of management can be settled by orders and instructions.

Then there are managers who think that all they have to do is wait for instructions from above and mechanically direct them into lower channels without even considering how, in the given conditions, they should be carried out to get the best results. Such managers ignore the advice of specialists and experienced personnel and demand only one thing—that their instructions be carried out. This, they think, is firm management.

Lenin demanded that our cadres 'should play less at administrative direction', and put the matter bluntly when he said that communists must prove in practice that they are able to unite and direct the work of specialists by getting to the heart of a matter and making a thorough study of it.

The intelligent manager does not take all the decisions himself. His art lies in an ability to keep a group of people functioning smoothly and to bring to his decisions all the knowledge and experience of his specialists, and the group that must carry them out. More than anything else, economic and production management calls for an ability to rely on the knowledge and experience of specialists and the entire group of workers.

The Party is taking decisive measures against 'administrative direction' and elements of subjectivism and voluntarism in planning and management. It demands that plans be laid on a strictly scientific basis, with a sober estimate of actual conditions and possibilities. All sections of a plan should dovetail, and targets should be fully backed up with material and financial resources. Any arbitrary exaggeration or reduction of planned targets, or lack of the necessary co-ordination between them, can greatly damage planned administration of the economy.

Elements of formalism and bureaucracy that prevent the real interests of the country from being upheld or interfere with the development of production are sometimes to be found in enterprises, in economic councils, and even in credit and financial organisations. There are, for example, very important stages and sectors in production without which it is impossible to get along. They yield neither immediate turnover nor profit, however, and that is evidently why financial bodies and economic councils often lose interest in them. Experimental bases and laboratories in several important spheres of production have found themselves in this unenviable position in a number of cases. It is impossible to develop and introduce quantity production of new types of modern machinery and progressive materials and articles successfully without experimentation and laboratory tests. But experimental bases and laboratories require considerable outlays without apparent return. The fact that economies in experimental work today will lead to far greater losses later on does not worry the financial bodies, since the saving is credited to them while economic

councils and industrial establishments suffer the losses. That, evidently, is one of the reasons why a gap has formed in a number of spheres between the need for experimental work and the technical means to carry it out.

Financial bodies and banks contribute much to reducing production costs at enterprises. That is a good thing. But the financial mechanism does not detect the moment when costs begin to drop at the expense of quality, and does not react to this negative factor in the way it should. Nor does this economic mechanism have the necessary sensitivity to the output of goods that are not in demand and lie in the warehouses. Effective economic incentives have not yet been found to speed up the switch-over from production of obsolete models to production of the latest and most advanced types of goods.

A superficial, purely bureaucratic approach to economic problems contributes neither to the development of socialist production nor to scientific and technical progress. The work of our planning, economic and financial bodies and our banks must have a strictly scientific foundation, taking comprehensive account of the most advanced trends in modern machine production. Financial bodies and banks must do more than skilfully gather in money for the country's budget. They must also master the no less difficult art of effective investment for the foreseeable future as well as for the present.

The programme of the CPSU urges that economic levers, among them commodity relations, be utilised to the full. This is, at the same time, a way of overcoming elements of administrative direction. But there is a broad, important sphere of the economy where economic levers are not being utilised fully—this is the sphere of production and economic relations between socialist enterprises. In principle these enterprises are self-supporting, but in practice this imposes certain definite limitations. The principle is not as effective as it should be, for one thing, because it does not apply fully to the economic bodies that unite the enterprises, and also because the relations between them are significantly regulated by administrative rather than economic methods. We do not apply the trade mechanism in wholesale trade, for example, in the way we should. Broader utilisation of direct economic relations between socialist enterprises would help to reduce the cost of, and considerably simplify, the present unwieldy machinery of material and technical supply. Questions connected with this deserve close study both by planning and economic bodies and research institutions.

Lenin gave definite instructions on the type of relations that should be developed between socialist enterprises. 'I believe', he wrote, 'that self-supporting trusts and establishments have been set up so that they should be wholly responsible for not operating at a loss' (*Works*, Russian edition, vol. 35, p. 468). Planned state administration of self-supporting socialist enterprises, as Lenin saw it, made them economically responsible for observing state interests and devoting themselves completely to those interests 'by business-like methods'. To do this they must, of course, have the necessary rights, broad opportunities to display initiative, and room to manoeuvre in carrying out their production plans.

The larger scale of production, the more complex economic ties and relationships and the new technical and economic problems arising today make it imperative that the planning and organisation of production should be improved and the scientific level of economic management raised. In this the Party is following Lenin's precept 'not to start all over again from the beginning, not to reorganise right and left, but to *utilise* what has already been built to the greatest possible extent. As few general reorganisations as possible and as many business-like measures, approaches, methods and instructions on how to attain our goal as possible that have been tested in practice and have proven their worth' (*Works*, Russian edition, Vol. 30, p. 379). Adhering to this policy, the Party

believes the solution to urgent problems will be found not in premature administrative reforms and endless reorganisation but in a painstaking, comprehensive study of our own practical experience, gained locally and in the centre, and in the integrated development, amendment and improvement of the system of planning and management, a system that must be made more flexible and efficient if it is to measure up to present-day conditions.

Extensive work is being done in this direction. Never before have these problems been so widely discussed in the press, research institutes and organisations, planning and economic bodies, industrial establishments, etc. Researchers, specialists, factory and office workers are searching wisely and with deep interest for solutions to problems of local and country-wide importance. Accumulated experience and existing methods are being studied and analysed, weak aspects and outmoded organisational forms and methods of economic management are being subjected to critical examination, and a search is being made for more efficient solutions—all of which is producing many needed and useful results. Every effort must be made in future to draw the public into taking a still wider direct part in discussing and solving basic problems.

It is now impossible to improve the theory and practice of socialism without comprehensive study and registration of everything that has been achieved in practice. The discussion of how to improve planning and management is producing much that is useful. The more the practical experience of management is studied and advanced trends in the development of production and science are taken into account, and the more well-founded proposals and recommendations based on that experience are made, the more effective the discussion will be. Unfortunately, elements of hare-brained schemes and a tendency to exaggerate certain problems as part of a current campaign can sometimes be discerned in the discussion, where unconsidered proposals are often advanced. At times, too, plans based on abstract theoretical arguments are put forward that completely ignore what has been accomplished in the particular field.

For several years now, for example, the problem of how to improve the price structure has been widely discussed. Economists have held conferences on the subject, articles in large numbers have been written, and books and pamphlets have been published. This has obviously all been useful to some degree, but the fact remains that those who actually deal with price-fixing are having a difficult time right now deciding how best to solve the problem. There are plenty of proposals and plans, but many of them are too general and schematic to be of value. Most of the discussion has dealt with general principles, while no one is making a proper study of the more than forty years' experience in planned price-fixing in the USSR, nor is any attention being paid to this experience, just as though it did not exist. This is the kind of unadulterated theorising organically unconnected with a study of practical experience that Lenin called 'hare-brained, bureaucratic planning'.

In our search for better methods we must proceed from the main historical premise, the basic fact that socialism is the product of large-scale machine industry. 'If the working people who are introducing socialism', said Lenin, 'are unable to adapt their institutions to the way in which large-scale machine production should function, the introduction of socialism is out of the question' (*Works*, Russian edition, Vol. 27, p. 186). Economists who are studying ways of improving planning and management should always bear in mind the present-day level of large-scale machine production and the types of organisation and management best adapted to it, how to concentrate, specialise and combine different types of production efficiently, and how to employ incentives. Of considerable interest, for example, is the current experiment of organising production associations, or firms, in many industries. Improvement of planning requires broad discussion of the most pressing problems. To be effective these

discussions must be purposeful and business-like, and based on practice. Planning and management bodies should make a serious study of the proposals put forward and apply them to further development. It is intolerable that some people working in these bodies do not study the proposals and views expressed in discussions with the attention they deserve. Planning and management bodies should help to raise the level of discussion and take from it whatever is valuable.

Steps are being taken to ensure extensive employment of economic incentives to develop production. Economic levers must stimulate establishments and industries to make better use of their basic production assets, to economise materials, to introduce new techniques more rapidly, to put out goods of better quality, to raise productivity, and to make themselves highly profitable. This will create more harmony between the interests of each production group and each individual.

These important problems can be resolved more efficiently only if the solution is based on the latest scientific findings, everywhere taking practical experience into account. If our economists are to carry out the tasks facing them they must clearly recognise and admit the failings and drawbacks in their research; and the first thing they must do is bring research into closer contact with the practical problems of life.

Political economy is the foundation on which all branches of economics rest. But until now it has had a rather one-sided development, primarily as a course of study; all its problems have been adjusted to that. It is chiefly descriptive, explaining the main features of socialist relations of production, defining the more general economic laws of socialism, and describing in general terms the most important economic forms, principles and methods of socialist economic management and related economic categories.

All that is useful knowledge, but political economy cannot and should not remain a mere study course describing and explaining the economic essence of socialism. The political economy of socialism must do more today than just explain the essence of the economic processes taking place in socialist society. It must give more and more concrete instructions on how to guide these processes better and more efficiently. It must not only describe the advantages of socialism over capitalism but must indicate definite ways of achieving their fullest realisation.

The main thing, in actual fact, that textbooks on political economy should teach, from the first page to the last, is concrete mastery of the Marxist method of analysing economic phenomena and processes. Economists now devote more attention to developing problems of methodology, which is often looked upon as an abstract problem in logic whose solution is not intended to enrich science by generalising practical experience. The result at times is *a priori* deduction. Such conclusions, based on a one-sided understanding of certain general principles of dialectics, without a thorough study and consideration of the specific, historically determined features of the socialist method of production, inevitably miss the essence of the problem. This has a negative effect on the working out of basic problems, and primarily on study of the economic laws of socialism. Solutions often boil down to formulating, or improving on the formulation of, some law and enumerating its requirements.

The formulations of laws in themselves, even though correct, do very little to help solve the concrete problems that arise daily in economic activity. To practical workers they are merely the presentation of the problem. Their main difficulty is not in understanding the law but in knowing how to apply it.

Economics must be able to tell our cadres *how* economic laws operate in given conditions, how they should be taken into account and used in planning and management, and in solving the basic problems of building the material and technical foundation of communism. Therefore a thorough study has to be made

of the living fabric of the actual economic processes in which the economic laws operate. The people working in planning and management must also constantly study those processes. Planning and administrative organisations should gradually develop into large research centres. Unless they do so they will be unable to cope with the tasks facing them.

Two things are needed to ensure a scientific approach to contemporary economic problems: a sharp rise in the level of the qualitative analysis and genuine quantitative analysis. Statements in the press claiming that it is time to replace qualitative analysis with quantitative cannot be taken seriously. It is not a question of substituting one for the other but of correctly combining the two. The backward state of qualitative analysis, its relatively low level, is what is holding back the broad introduction of mathematical methods. The gap between economic theory and life and the elements of sketchy over-simplification in theory adversely affects the solution of problems of quantitative analysis. True, over-simplified theoretical schemes are easier to work up mathematically, and some economists and mathematicians, as a matter of fact, feel it their task to reduce a complicated problem to a simple theoretical scheme easy to turn into a mathematical formula. But mathematical solutions based on such a shaky foundation prove impracticable and useless when tested. Mathematical methods can and should be widely employed in economics only when they are solidly based on thorough theoretical research and comprehensive qualitative analysis.

Science is powerful because all its generalisations and deductions rest on facts and comprehensive and deep-going analysis of facts. For that one must naturally have sources of exact, objective information about the economic processes actually taking place. Such information can and should be gathered primarily by an efficient statistical service. We have a ramified statistical apparatus with wide experience that is quite capable of providing all the information needed both for research and for management, but for a long time publication of data was extremely restricted. That did great harm both to research and administration. The situation has radically changed in recent years. Statistics are being published more regularly and more broadly; nevertheless both researchers and practical workers (planners and managers) have substantial and justified complaints against the statistical bodies. The initial data of the Central Statistical Board should be utilised more widely in research.

Lenin provided an exhaustive description of what the statistical service should be like in a socialist society. It must, he stressed, be neither an 'academic' nor an 'independent' agency, but one of 'socialist construction, of verification, control and registration of what the socialist state needs above all right now' (*Works*, Russian edition, Vol. 33, p. 303). Objectivity and complete information are what both science and practice must have. Of late the Central Statistical Board of the USSR has been putting out general year books and handbooks dealing with particular fields. But these do not contain the complete information required to make a thorough and comprehensive analysis of current economic processes and to establish their causes and all their determining factors. Yet the chief value of statistical data lies in making it possible to do just that.

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Translated by Novosti

Surveys and Reviews

THE TRUE TRANSLATION OF POETRY

Walter C. May

MUCH has been written on the theory of prose translation, but little on the problems of translating poetry. This is because, up to now, the old, old cry 'Poetry is untranslatable' has so frequently been heard. Critics have denied the possibility. Translators themselves have been intimidated by such talk and have given up the struggle. Publishers will not consider translated poetic work unless it has the name of some well-known poet to boost its sales. Small wonder, then, that this rich field has been so deserted.

The reading public show little interest in translated poetry—as indeed they do towards our own poets in general. Perhaps they are not to be blamed for this, as much of what passes for poetry today is written for a very limited audience. European poets, generally, reserve poetry for the expression of mainly emotional themes, and some of their work begins to approach very near to James Joyce prose. Clots of consciousness, streams of emotional symbols, are highly personalised things and, apart from their incomprehensible nature, are of small interest to people at large. This kind of poetry does not touch them. Maybe it is untranslatable; but that does not imply that other types of poetry are excluded.

In an excellent article in a book devoted to 'The mastery of translation' published by The Soviet Writer Press* in 1963, E. Etkind, of Leningrad, has some pointed things to say. He refers to a reply given by the Soviet poetess Vera Inber to the theoreticians, at a conference in Rome, when she said: 'The word has gone round that poetry in general is untranslatable. That seems to me profoundly untrue. Poetry can be and must be translated. But I think that, best of all, poets should give themselves to the translation of poems and verse in which sense and thought exist, and not only emotions. Emotion, like the dew of heaven, soon evaporates when not fortified by thought. In translation little of it remains. That is one more argument for the use of poetic thought. Mastering the difficulties of a foreign tongue, poets of the whole world must as far as possible translate one another, giving preference to all works which can make mankind really and truly happy.'

Having carefully selected our originals, we must next think of style. The problem of verse translation is different in principle from prose translation. Words in a poem stand in rhythmic ranks, which create great mutual power—affecting each other, increasing expressive capacity, augmenting emotional impact, and harmonising their component sounds. The translator's true aim is to re-create in another tongue the composition in its peculiar singularity of content and form. He must find a corresponding whole while finding equivalents of the basic parts.

Compositions are a co-ordination of words into phrases. It is the phrase which is the unit, not the word. It may occur that a word is untranslatable, but a phrase is rarely so. Translating phrases, refashioning in another language the architectonic correlation and stylistic expression, intonation and melodic pattern of the original, the translator tackles his prime problem. This is to recast the composition as a whole and to carry it over to his readers, losing

* *Masterstvo perevoda*. Soviet Pisatel, Moscow, 1963.

nothing of the richness of ideas or the pictorial, artistic, individual, emotional tone of the original poem.

Etkind points out that the difference between translating poetry and prose derives from the different relations between the composition as a whole and its constituent parts. As a rule, in translating prose one can preserve the majority of the elemental parts which compose its verbal texture. The whole is re-created through its component parts. A little may be lost here and there—a pun, a proverb, an idiom. But even these sometimes come across, and translations can run on parallel, word for word. It is possible in prose because the word stands before all as the conveyor of sense and because the pre-ordained stylistic colour and expression, and also the rhythmic and phonetic qualities of the individual word are not essential, but of only secondary importance.

But in poetry the choice of words for their very rhythmic or phonetic qualities is fundamental. The metric scheme and rhyme pattern are an intrinsic part which affect the whole and must be translated and reconstituted. Of course, this correspondence will be more important in some poems than in others, depending on the type of poem. The classic poem, for instance, depends more on its rational, logical content and unadorned style than on coloured descriptive or highly charged emotive passages. Romantic poems, on the other hand, require that just these latter qualities should predominate. In such circumstances the individual word must sometimes suffer in order that the mood may be kept or the rhythm preserved. The problem changes with the style. The character of the whole—the main feeling—is the essential; the word is secondary. Again, in philosophical poetry it is the idea that is the heart of the poem and here the translator must be careful to preserve literal as well as the artistic truth. He must acquaint himself with the mind and background of his selected poet—his times, his social standing, his character—in order to be sure that no extraneous meaning creeps in and no succinct emphasis is omitted.

In descriptive poems the poet may select according to preference those objects which seem to him to characterise the scene. To these he may apply phraseology which evokes most distinctly the objects not only in their material sense but in their emotional and symbolic sense also. In this way he creates atmosphere. When the translator tackles this type of problem he must be aware in every sense of the emotional and symbolic charges which certain words and objects carry if he wishes to maintain poetic fidelity.

Where musicality is involved we are faced with the problem of rhymes. Standing at the end of the line, reinforcing each other by the use of repetitive sounds, carrying the ear on and enlivening the senses in anticipation of the coming concord, they play as important a function in a poem as the skeleton does in a body. They unite and stiffen the whole, and give it its outline. Generally speaking, it would be deleterious for the translator to overlook or ignore their importance. He should aim at giving them the same importance as they have in the original. Sometimes it will be extreme. At other times it will be subtle—an internal rhyme which fortifies a line; a head rhyme which sets the tone of a line; or a hint of a rhyme which, while not as strong as a full rhyme, can yet be used with devastating effect. If they are germane to the poem the translator must try to capture them. But he must not on any account twist and malform a whole phrase or line merely for the sake of an unimportant rhyme. Let it go.

There is also a rhythmic element in melody, which is not the same thing as metre. There is a rhythm of spoken accent—a sentence stress—which runs counterpoint to the main metre like an undercurrent in water. This gives life to a poem, and that too must be caught if the new poem is to match the old.

Lastly comes the question of purely literal accuracy. If pursued in the dictionary sense this can, and often does, kill a poem. By insistence on the part the whole is lost. The individual trees stand out clearly, but the mystery of the forest is gone. It is not a crime, however, to be accurate in individual words. As in prose, a passage sometimes appears in which literal and poetic accuracy go hand in hand. In the main little losses must be sustained to preserve the whole.

Samuel Marshak has said 'There is sinful inexactitude, but there is also sinful exactitude.'

If verbal accuracy means that the translation becomes stiff and formal when the original is free and flowing it fails.

Again, Marshak said 'A poem must be able to stand in its own right in its own language, in its own country.'

A word of warning here—it is relatively easy to paraphrase when a difficulty arises. It can be the easy way out. But that is never good in translation, which is a matter of 90 per cent perspiration and 10 per cent inspiration. Words can be tracked and hunted down if time and patience are given. If poetic and verbal accuracy coincide a triumph is achieved, but painstaking efforts are necessary to reach it.

The art of translating consists in knowing what may legitimately take its place in order that the whole poem may be preserved. It is a question of literary priorities, decided upon after careful consideration of each individual poem.

Translation, like politics, is the art of the possible. Nothing of value must be lost, nothing extraneous must be added. The poet can only allow himself liberties in accord with the accepted conventions. The translator can only allow himself liberties—and these only rarely—when he has penetrated to the core of his chosen poet and knows his culture, his people, his times, his ideas—when, in fact, he knows his poet and loves him.

In translating from Russian special linguistic difficulties are met with. These are concerned with the differing nature of the English and Russian languages and the differing character of the general style of the poetry of the two countries. Poetry, like all good literature, reflects the life and times of the country of its origin and carries in it something of the flavour and atmosphere of its native land. Russian history and tradition are quite different from ours, and the Russian language belongs to another family than ours.

Russian is an agglutinative language. It has a system of roots whose meanings are modified by prefixes and suffixes having grammatical significance. This tends to make much of the vocabulary polysyllabic, so that the average line of Russian verse consists of fewer but longer words than the average English one.

In our tongue we have a grammatical system which has dropped the Anglo-Saxon endings and depends more on the use of separate prepositions, which tends to give us a mono- or bisyllabic vocabulary. The total effect is to make the ternary metres (dactyls, anapæsts and amphibrachs) go rather more readily and naturally into Russian verse than into English, where the shorter words give a choppy or galloping rhythm, as in the famous *How they brought the good news from Aix to Ghent* or in *Lochinvar*. The 'swift anapæsts' do not throng so hurriedly in Russian, and dactyls are sometimes used for quite slow-moving poems such as Nekrasov's *Yedu li nochyu po ulitsye tyomnoi*. And Lermontov could choose amphibrachs for his solemn and melancholy *I skuchno i grustno, i nekomu ruku podat*.

To preserve the solemn effect of serious poems which would be ruined by ternary metre in English it may be necessary sometimes to change to binary metre. However, other changes of metre—such as from trochee to iambic—can rarely be defended, as this changes the atmosphere of the original.

The English economy of syllables presents another problem in sometimes leaving a gap in the metre to be filled. Any reputable translator finds it repugnant to 'pad' a line, but inevitably circumstances arise which make it necessary. Then the principle must be that the addition should be only an extension of the sense contained within the line—or by reference to the rest of the poem—and in keeping with the known style and the phraseology of the given poet. Nothing extraneous, however clever or artistic, must be allowed to creep in.

The opposite can also occur where a Russian line—using case-endings, avoiding separate prepositions and dispensing entirely with definite and indefinite articles—proves exceptionally compact and the English line is hard put to it to find a match. Then the resources of English must come into play—the use of monosyllabic adjectives in place of lengthier Russian ones; the judicious choice of nouns, where we have such a wealth of synonyms; the use of the possessive apostrophe, and similar syntactical devices which shorten the line. One language can be played off against the other.

It will be readily seen from the preceding remarks that, due to its grammatical endings, Russian has a ready-made stock of double and triple rhymes which are not easy to imitate in English. There one is forced to fall back on words of Latin origin, not always in keeping with the tone of the poem, or to use hypermetre. The only other device is the employment of the participial ending 'ing', which does correspond in some ways to the Russian grammatical endings. The danger is that this can only be employed with verbs, which prohibits its too-frequent use. As mentioned, adjectival or noun endings of a polysyllabic nature are nearly all of Latin derivation, and except in poems of high moral or ethical tone they do not readily fit in. The solution here appears to be a careful search for native equivalents and a judicious selection of the other means available, not leaning too heavily on any one expedient.

Metre presents a difficulty where lines are lengthy. The Russian language, being near in construction and feeling to the Greek, and having a marked musical similarity in its sonorous chords, goes with a majestic swing into classic hexameters, whereas the weakness of English for this metre is well known. The line sags in the centre and falls apart in two halves. Here it seems permissible, if the content of the poem can still be kept, to reduce the line by a foot and to use pentametres. Even here an eye must be kept on the *cæsura* so that it does not fall too often in the centre of the line and thus weaken it.

English falls most naturally into iambic metre, which corresponds most nearly with the natural rhythms of our speech. Great care must therefore be taken when translating Russian into trochees. It is very simple to admit false accents in an unguarded moment. To avoid monotony and to prevent choppiness it is also necessary to vary word length. Singular nouns are awkward in trochaic metre, where they are almost always preceded in English by the definite or indefinite article, which does not exist in Russian. Sometimes it does not sound too unnatural to omit the article in English, and sometimes one may legitimately use the plural when the sense of the original is not impaired. Even a collective noun will help out in special cases.

The Russian verbs with their 'aspects', which in many respects are more subtle than the English tenses, also present a challenge to the translator. Thanks to the perfective and imperfective aspects the present tense and the future tense in Russian are very expressive, and their fine shades of meaning and the subtle inherent emphasis which they carry must be carefully studied and reproduced. On the other hand, the comparative simplicity of the past tense must not be allowed to lull the translator into a false sense of security. English has the advantage here, and the original must be closely considered to see which form of the past tense is most appropriate.

Many Russian verbs are also impersonal and of an impassive nature. This is a peculiarity of the language, giving it its special flavour. It is all too easy to be too forthright in translating passages which have this deliberate 'blurring of the edges'. What is not said in a poem is often as important as what is, and sometimes a translator is called upon to translate even that which is not said in the original!

The general style of Russian poetry also contains pitfalls for the unwary. It is so mundane when compared with our English heritage.

The Hon. Maurice Baring pointed this out in his introduction to *The Oxford Book of Russian Verse* four decades ago: 'Russian poetry does not only cling to the solid earth, but it is based on and saturated with sound common-sense, with a curious matter-of-fact quality.'

There are fewer exclusively 'poetic' words and 'literary' expressions in Russian than in English, and nothing approaching the separate poetic diction such as we have. Thanks largely to Pushkin, verse follows the vernacular fairly closely. Indeed, just as some of Dickens's prose can be read almost as poetry, so can some of Pushkin's poems be read in the accents of ordinary Russian conversational prose.

The strength of Russian poetry lies in its proportions. There is a great sense of freedom, space and solidity. The vast Russian *prostor* keeps breaking through. Russian poems are like the Russian plains. One might compare them with a Doric column—simple and unadorned; while the English genius could be likened to a Corinthian column—graceful, imaginative and decorated. This tends to create further difficulties for the translator, and makes some translations look a little bald and even prosaic. The temptation to 'embroider' some themes to suit the more fanciful English taste should be held in check, for one does not gild the lily. The naked beauty of the original must not be covered by any dressing. Sometimes even a figleaf can be superfluous.

This is particularly true when we consider Pushkin's works. His characteristics are simplicity of style, musicality of tone, harmony of content and form, universality of feeling and economy of expression. His French translator said of his style 'Not a superfluous syllable'—and Prosper Mérimée was no bad judge.

It is a mistake to 'modernise' Pushkin, just as it was a mistake to 'modernise' the Bible. All that needs doing is to make certain unintelligible archaisms into intelligible archaisms; that is, not to bring them slap up to date but to modernise in moderation, still preserving the atmosphere of his times. It is intolerable, for instance, when J. Thomas Shaw, in his translation of Pushkin's Letters, recently published in America, makes him speak of his Lyceum colleagues as his 'buddies' and repeatedly burst out with 'My golly!'

The opposite of this is true when dealing with Mayakovsky's fiery effusions. Here it would be difficult to be too modern or too daring with the use of colloquial expressions, for Mayakovsky spoke often in the language of the street—or, we might even say, of the gutter. It would not be out of place to hear him calling his colleagues 'my bleedin' mates'. It should be possible, in reading translated work, to differentiate between the styles of the various authors. An anthology, for instance, should reflect the changing speech patterns of the centuries and not be translated all in one idiom. We would not like Shakespeare to sound like Shaw, after all.

This leads on to a consideration of what to do about colloquial speech and dialect in poetic translation. It is at once clear that, if it is part of the texture and fabric of the poem, an effort must be made to incorporate it in the translation. But into which kind of dialect? To be sure, not some studied exact tape-recording of a local farmer, but rather a literary convention acceptable in this particular field, one which gives a sense of conviction without being

pedantic. One must not put the words of a tinker into the mouth of a sailor or the idiom of a soldier upon the tongue of a tailor. At times the introduction of idiomatic speech will enliven an otherwise dull picture and will round off and enrich a character.

If I quote a personal experience it may illustrate the point. It occurred during an attempt to translate Lermontov's *Zaveshchaniye*. This is the dying request of a mortally wounded soldier to a comrade going home on leave. He is asked to conceal the circumstances of the soldier's death from his parents—assuming they are still alive—but to reveal them to his old flame, who has thrown him over long ago.

One must remember that soldiers were enlisted in the Russian Army for a period of twenty-five years; that the Tsar's service would take them hundreds of miles away from home, which they would rarely, if ever, see again, and that, thanks to the hardships of a military life, to disease and despair, to be called up amounted to a death sentence.

The essence of the poem is the human spirit of the dying man. Do not hurt the old folk unnecessarily, but let the sweetheart know. She might like to, although she would not ask. Anyway, the news will not hurt her because she no longer has any feeling for him. He shows courage, modesty and ironic humour in the face of death—in fact all the noblest qualities in a common soldier.

When I translated the poem I could not give the piece conviction. It is written in the first person throughout, and my words did not come from the mouth of a real soldier. I thought this over. What kind of soldier, recognisable to an English reader, would have and portray the very qualities—warm feeling, gravity, humour, humanity—in *his speech*?

Like a flash it came to me! Old Bill, of Bairnsfather fame—the immortal Cockney soldier, the archetype of cheerful courage in World War I. Near enough to Lermontov's time, and with conditions similar enough in battle. It would have been useless, for instance, to think of the last war in those terms, for there the machine played a relatively larger part than the man. Here was a chance to recast the poem. I did so in Cockney dialect, or what passes for the Cockney dialect in literature, and the effect was wonderful. The poem sprang to life at once. It had what the Cockney had—a heart!

In dealing with folk-idiom, ballads and suchlike another problem faces the translator. The use of the ballad form has never died out in Russia and still rings true today. In England, however, we have had little genuine folk-ballad for a century or more. If one translates into ballad metre it immediately sounds somewhat archaic, although the topic may be modern. The way round this seems to be to use the metre carefully, but to steer clear of 'folksy' vocabulary—no 'said she' and no 'quoth he'. There are some groups of folk-singers in England today who are turning out good ballads, with a modern ring. Some of the anti-atom-bomb lyrics are quite in the old tradition, and serious programmes are to be seen on television, which will all help to make the ballad form more acceptable. Houseman managed to avoid the pitfalls in his *Shropshire Lad*, and with care rustic poetry can still be made to ring true.

There is a growing tendency for translations of poetry to be made by teams of two working together—a translator and a poet. This must surely be a second-best method, even with talented people. The source is twice removed, the subtle shades of meaning and emphasis are in double danger of becoming lost, and a veil is drawn between the translation and the original. Communication between two people is not always complete, and a slight drift by one member of the team can so easily be enlarged by the second if he has no access to the original by which to check his position. Surely much of the word-music must be lost on him too. He tends to rely far too much on his eye in using his

crib, and far too little on his ear. Poetry must be read aloud to get its full value. I see no advance towards fidelity in poetic translation down that path.

Yet the need for such translation is enormous. International understanding can be fortified through literature. Treasures of other nations, till now locked away behind the bars, can become available for all in a mutual exchange which can only enrich life and improve relations. Music and art know no barriers—and neither should literature. If English people who love poetry only knew of the rich harvest which awaits them in Russian fields they would set to work to prove the falsity of the old lie that ‘poetry is untranslatable’. Burns is read and loved in Moscow ; why not Pushkin in Edinburgh ?

Given the love, the time, the knowledge, the patience, the persistence, complete humility and the courage to suffer in the pursuit of poetic truth in translation, all things are possible.

VARIOUS APPROACHES TO VOICE DEVELOPMENT AND VOCAL EDUCATION

Georges Cunelli

SOVIET EDUCATIONISTS have always shown the keenest interest in the study of vocal problems. During the last few years this interest has intensified with the publication of many books on the rational approach to vocal techniques, the training of pupils in the conservatoires, and study of the best traditions of Russian operatic singers of the past. Few people in the western world realize that the Russians are just as keen on delving into the depths of the human larynx as on exploring the heights of outer space.

I have devoted half a century of my life to an intensive study of human voices. I have been concerned with every aspect of the vocal problem—classification, reparation, restoration, development, questionnaires of pupils, condition of health, musical aptitude and, when necessary, phoniatic consultation.

I consider the voice to be technically ready for the stage only when the vocal phonetics, acoustics and physiology are correctly balanced. The teacher's experienced, vocal-acoustical ears alone have the right to judge, accept or reject the pupil's technical standard. Once this has been done, the next step is to concentrate on musical expression and an appropriate singing repertoire.

Mother Nature, I am convinced, is mainly responsible for many excellent operatic voices and highly talented artists. To deal with beautiful voices is a great pleasure and a relaxation for the teacher's ear ; it is, however, important to bear in mind that a teacher of singing can only develop his knowledge through a great variety of vocal work, just as a doctor cannot do without clinical experience.

In a competitive society voice education is concentrated mainly in the hands of private enterprise. Some people who call themselves teachers of singing are capable only of teaching pupils to shout, to put a gimmicky song over in a loud voice, to make money through propaganda for commercial vulgarity, to amuse a selected audience by means of a ‘jockey’ running a ‘hit or miss’ race.

Another type of teacher works on a slightly higher level. He has a modest reputation, and is considered good simply because he does not ruin the voice. But he may use a pupil irresponsibly, as a guinea-pig, and often with disastrous results. Teaching is an easy job for retired veterans of the opera or concert stage, some of whom find a comfortable niche in established colleges of music. The majority of such teachers use the most common of all approaches in their work—the imitative method, plus fanciful metaphorical explanations. They themselves admit that it is quite a simple matter to teach pupils with real voices.

To gain admission to a college, certain essential qualifications are required of the applicant : a good voice with full compass and an agreeable timbre suitable for the professional stage. Preferably the voice should be without organic defects, with correct intonation, without tremolo, and not too nasal or too guttural. It sometimes happens that a pupil possesses a voice of beautiful quality but one that is difficult to classify through the teacher's ear perception alone. Brilliant voices of this kind sometimes fall between two stools and give teachers a real headache. In the history of vocal methodology they are known as *intermédiaire* ; their names are legion—Battistini, Jean de Reszke, Zenatello, Broggi, Melchior, etc.

If singing teachers in England would cease to keep their multiform private, empiric experiences secret it would, I am convinced, produce fruitful results in their daily practice. Why do they not, in difficult cases, consult experts in vocal phonetics, whose laboratories are equipped with scientific instruments necessary for precise objective investigation, and whose practitioners possess both knowledge and (I hope) a vocal-acoustical and musical ear ?

In western Europe, under private enterprise, teachers are forced to begin their work by eliminating their pupils' defects, sometimes even having to move into the sphere of logopedics. Then follows technique of voice development and, only after that, musical and emotional expression. The teacher has to bear in mind, too, that the most important thing in voice education is correct classification. A wrong diagnosis of a singer's vocal defects, detected only by ear, often leads to wrong remedies and bad results.

There are scientific institutes in both eastern and western Europe, either private establishments or attached to national conservatoires. In the West the teacher, in his daily work, has great advantages because he has to deal with all types of voices, easy as well as difficult. In eastern Europe it is well known that only excellent voices can gain admission into the conservatoires. As a result the teachers there are deprived of clinical work, which means that they need less scientific help than in the West.

For an example of how eastern European countries approach their vocal problems let us take the USSR. There voice education is in the hands of national state conservatoires and schools, and only a small part in private practice at the homes of teachers from the establishments, or former opera singers.

The vocal test for admission to the conservatoires is severe. The entrance examination is given only for super-voices, and those admitted are only a few from many. The successful student is resident in the conservatoire for several years. He is given a scholarship grant that covers his living expenses, and receives a general musical, vocal and pedagogical education ; training in acting, dancing, fencing, languages ; facilities to visit operas, concerts, recitals and plays ; and the right to study an instrument of his own choice.

Vocal problems in the USSR, both theoretical and practical, are subjects of vigorous and fruitful public discussion. Thanks to the so-called ' iron curtain ', we in the West have been largely misled about the achievements of the USSR. We have been informed that the Russians are mere beginners, and are backward in the study of vocal problems. We have been led to think that they have no publications, journals or books on experimental phonetics. We have been misled about their work in the conservatoires, about their approach to vocal diagnosis and the development of voices, and how they deal with the so-called ' unity method ', which is now the ultimate goal. In England we have not the slightest idea of their considerable activities in the vocal-phonetic field. In collective work their achievements in the science of the human voice, according to all available data, demonstrate that they are devoting serious study, especially on healthy voice material, to vocal aesthetics, vocal anatomy, vocal physi-

ology and vocal acoustics. They are also making valuable contributions regarding the importance of higher nervous activity as a regulator of the entire human organism, which rules and disciplines all vocal expression.

It is only recently that a few singing teachers have begun to realise the importance of co-operation with the new science of vocal phonetics, which reactionary supporters of the old empiric method in the conservatoires so often rejected. Today, in the USSR, the primordial importance of linking the scientific laboratory with responsible teaching is fully recognised. In Leningrad, Kiev, Odessa and other cities there are laboratories attached to the conservatoires, under the direction of laryngologists or specialists in experimental phonetics. The famous Chaikovsky Conservatoire in Moscow houses one of the most modern and fully equipped vocal acoustical laboratories in the USSR, which has been proudly compared to the famous Bell Telephone Laboratory in New York.

When teachers of voice development are in doubt—though this rarely happens with super-voices in the conservatoires—they can gain helpful guidance through scientific explanation and mutual discussion. It is, of course, essential to establish a common language, a kind of vocal Esperanto. In vocal art, as in politics, co-existence between the scientist and the practical vocal worker is all-important. In eastern Europe much has already been accomplished. There is an abundance of valuable publications; endless discussions take place in the acoustical and physiological laboratories, all of which help considerably in detecting and resolving problems of voice classification, tessitura and compass. The new theory of vocal physiology, allied to high-speed internal larynx photo-X-ray-cinematography, makes it possible to study the larynx of a singer in full dynamism by taking 4,000 pictures in one second. This leaves the famous epoch of Garcia's investigations far behind.

Since 1937 six congresses have been held in the USSR to study problems connected with the improvement of vocal education. Delegates included scientists, specialists working in various branches of vocal acoustics, physiology and hygiene, and teachers of singing. They accomplished a great deal of constructive work, particularly in the field of children's vocal education, as was shown at the Scientific Vocal Conference in Moscow in 1961, where they stressed the careful consideration paid to the development and protection of children's voices and to the education of their musical ear. Another highly important recent development is the strengthening of the singer's bodily and vocal health through application of advances in physiological knowledge to hygiene and prophylaxis. Sports and physical activities of all kinds are now advocated, in open air, water and snow, including a wide range of gymnastics. The building of health in this way greatly improves the singer's stamina and the balance of his neuro-psychic artistic temperament.

The 1957 All-Union Congress severely condemned the practices of certain teachers, especially their ridiculous, antiquated 'secret methods', and denounced their irresponsible attitude to their work. Professor Sveshnikov, rector of the Moscow Chaikovsky Conservatoire and artistic director of the State Academic Capella, made many invaluable suggestions regarding the improvement of teaching methods, and moved a resolution demanding heavy punishment for teachers responsible for ruining professional voices. The fight against hack-workers in teaching has only just come into the open, but a plan of action to attack this problem has been organised.

Personally, I can only admire this recent rational approach to voice education. I foresee further achievements in the near future through their establishing of the unique method in vocal technology, in harmonious co-existence with the development of creative Russian musical expression. I hope it will not be long before teachers in this country strike out in the same direction.

A GREAT TEACHER

Makarenko: His Life and Work. (FLPH. 280pp., 7/6. Available from Collet's.)

ANTON SEMYONOVICH MAKARENKO, one of the wisest, most human and skilful of educationists, did not always enjoy the universal high esteem accorded to his work today.

The 'free educationists' of the first twenty post-revolutionary years, hugging their office chairs and their theories, waged an endless sniping campaign against him. They disapproved of his attitude to discipline, of the demands he made on his pupils, and above all of his use of the ceremonial with the military aspects that gave dignity, discipline and even grandeur to every ceremonial occasion. It raised the morale of the youngsters, but it distinctly lowered that of the educational office-holders.

There was a period, too, in the later thirties when Makarenko did not rate very high, this time among the verbal educationists engulfed in theory.

But life proved Makarenko right and the armchair educationists wrong, and for some years now books by him and about him have been coming off the press.

Makarenko, His Life and Work is a collection of short contributions by some who knew him as a friend and others as teacher and friend, and of articles and lectures by him on educational problems.

Academician Medinsky introduces the reader in a brief and useful account of Makarenko's background which helps us to understand the character of the man who performed miracles of re-education, but who insisted that there were no miracles in education or re-education. In successful education there was respect for each individual pupil and for the community of pupils, there were demands which continually stretched the intellectual and moral qualities of the pupils, there was integrity of purpose, and there was an appreciation of order, beauty, gaiety and laughter.

All the contributors agree on these qualities of Makarenko, while many others are added. One former pupil writes: 'I remember numerous instances of Makarenko's extraordinary humanity, his loving kindness, especially his love for children. It is seldom one can meet a stern-eyed man . . . of rather austere appearance who possesses such a great and tender heart.'

With this greatness of heart went a relentless hostility to shams, to deceit, to moral cheating and to pampering.

That he was successful beyond expectation is proved by the role played in the life of the USSR by former waifs, strays and criminal children and adolescents. They are to be found in highly responsible positions all over the land and they never hide the fact that they were rehabilitated, no, educated, by Makarenko.

The English progressive educationist will

be raising his eyebrows continually as he reads of Makarenko's insistence on social manners, on cleanliness and on honesty—no smartening up or whitewashing just for inspectors. All these under him became habits, and the fine, the ideal, became the normal. For him education and training were possible only in a collective or community. It was in a collective that the rich individuality of each youngster could be developed. That he attached great importance to individuality is shown by every one of the contributors, like the girl who developed a passion for the theatre and who got a ticket from Makarenko every evening. She became a leading actress.

It must be borne in mind that Makarenko was a communist, and his approach to education is as a means of training citizens for Soviet society.

Some of his attitudes and beliefs may by many be considered old-fashioned, 'square'.

In the article on upbringing in the family page 157, he has much to say that deserves consideration. 'It is much easier to bring up a child properly and normally than to re-educate it.' And he insists that it is not at all a difficult task provided there is a complete family, three or four children, and honesty, respect and friendliness. No pedagogical tricks are of any use, and it should be remembered that 'upbringing takes place all the time' and that 'there are no trifles in a child's life'. *Everything* is important. His ideas on obedience and authority, on the different kinds of discipline are both stimulating and challenging, as are his ideas on work and play. He reminds parents that 'punishment, as such, is useless without a well-regulated domestic routine. Given proper routine, punishment can freely be dispensed with, and all that is needed is patience'.

Makarenko's views on sex and sex education will also be considered old-fashioned. 'The only kind of sexual life that it [social morality] recognises as normal and morally legitimate is that which is based on mutual love and finds expression in the family . . . in a union that pursues two aims—that of happiness and the birth and upbringing of children.' He continues: ' . . . a person's sexual life is being educated all the time, at every step, even when his parents and tutors are least thinking of sex education.'

I would strongly recommend the book for parent-teacher group discussion.

BEATRICE KING.

RETURN TO 'DEMOBITIS'

Looking Ahead. Vera Panova. (FLPH. 293pp., 5/-. Available from Collet's.)

THIS book was published in the Soviet Union in 1947, under the title *The Factory*. Thus we are in a position today to do some looking back. It was a Stalin Prize-winner.

The novel is about the problems and personalities involved in setting up a factory in the post-war period. The director, Listopad, is authoritarian but a hard and devoted worker. Men are returning from the wars to find their women, no longer girls, running banks of lathes and clinics and transport offices. Men are suffering from what came in Britain to be called 'demobitis'. Listopad's cheerful ruthlessness is shown as vital to the job of keeping things going, and his faults are seen as personal quirks, though the deeper problems are hinted at.

Uzdechich is the trade union representative. He arrives at Listopad's office with a pile of complaints. "'Please don't meddle in that'", Listopad said, "That's my business . . ."

The dislike between the two men grows. 'In private life Uzdechich was a martyr . . .' (his wife had been killed nursing in the war, leaving him with two baby daughters and a sick mother-in-law). 'Listopad had no use for him and these stories left him indifferent . . .'

Listopad is himself widowed early in the book. The return to his empty flat is well observed and written. After mooning about and incredulously looking at some of his wife's things he suddenly lies down and falls asleep for the first time in three days, and sleeps the clock round.

A recent number of *Soviet Literature* quotes a study by a critic called A. Kogan, in which Panova's character of Listopad is held up as an example of ' . . . the chasm between the "great man" and the masses which was artificially cultivated during that period . . .' Listopad is later compared with another hero, Baluyev (of *Meet Baluyev!* by Vadim Kozhevnikov). 'Unlike Listopad, Baluyev realises that it is he who exists for the people, not the people for him.'

The book ends with Listopad in a car, having passed through a personal crisis being driven through the whirling snow of a Russian winter. His thoughts, reported in an extended purple patch, are mingled with descriptions of the new town through which the car is passing.

' . . . Soldiers went into battle with the words "For my country, for Stalin", whether they had a scientific foundation for their faith or not. I live by simple slogans although I am grounded in historical materialism and many other sciences . . .'

This inner monologue is really in the form of an imaginary dialogue with his new love, Nonna. It is the nearest we are taken to the heart and mind of Listopad and it may be that here is a literary clue. It is not enough to say 'No man thinks like that in his innermost private thoughts'. The point is that Listopad hardly has 'private thoughts' any longer. His very weaknesses, mentioned earlier, are at once rationalised by him as *external* difficulties, 'difficult people', and so on.

D. C. WALLIS.

SOVIET VERSE ANTHOLOGIES

Soviet Russian Verse: An Anthology. Ed. R. R. Milner-Gulland. (Pergamon Press. 252pp., 21/-)

A Soviet Verse Reader. Ed. T. J. Binyon. (Allen and Unwin. 164pp., 8/6.)

THERE is one aspect in criticism which writers often ignore, for it is neither startling nor even newsworthy. It is so much more vivid to emphasise change and contrast than to underline the essential truths of continuity. In England contemporaries writing on Eliot forget to link him with the chain of our metaphysical poets from the seventeenth century. Of course, the poet himself is the last person to desire this treatment. He must always come forward, like Yevtushenko, with the conviction that he has something new and unique, out of context with the traditions. Poetry has an uncanny knack of flying out of the grasp of political pressures, and perhaps nothing illustrates this so well as Mr. Milner-Gulland's anthology *Soviet Russian Verse*. Here the verses of those who owe the beginning of their inspiration to the nineteenth century stand alongside those of writers who have known no other régime than the Soviets, and they in turn are followed by some who have come to fame since Stalin's death, notably Bulat Okudzhava.

Yet even Okudzhava, with his positive humour, his sophisticated humanity, carries reflections of that delightful whimsicality we know as the mark of Nekrassov way back in the nineteenth century.

This anthology is well printed on good paper; the poems chosen combine with the brief introductions to outline the poets' craft in thumbnail sketches, and indeed, particularly with some of the younger writers, make one wish for more biographical detail.

The *Soviet Verse Reader*, edited by Mr. T. J. Binyon, less expensive and in more workaday style, has a more limited scope, comprising only poems published in the Soviet Union. Emigré poets are out, as also are writers like Blok, Bryusov and Gumilov. The entirely different aim of the anthologist is given in his introductory sentence, where he justifies the inclusion of some 'not for the intrinsic merit of their poems but because they represent a typical aspect of Soviet poetry'. Nevertheless, as the publisher's blurb admits, poets have been included 'whose work has been neglected or even suppressed in the Soviet Union, such as Zabolotsky and Mandelstam'.

Hard words are said in the introduction of Yevtushenko's later development, although space is found for four poems by him. Altogether seventeen poets are represented, poets who have come to the fore in the first half of this century and some of whom will not lose their place in fashion through the next fifty years. This collection is also aimed at interesting the young, for

the notes and vocabulary are easy and take little for granted. What an interesting exercise for the serious student to take down a notebook and anticipate posterity's verdict for future comparison! Useful brief biographies precede the notes in which the editor wisely refrains from such presumption.

E. STOWERS JOHNSON.

IN YEVTUSHENKO SPIRIT

Winter Station. Yevgeny Yevtushenko, trs. Oliver J. Frederiksen. (Carl Gerber Verlag, Munich, \$2.50.)

MRS. FREDEREKSEN makes clear in his over-brief preface what he attempts to do—to give a literal, faithful rhyming version, in the spirit of Yevtushenko's original. *Winter Station* tells of the poet's visit to his childhood home, and of the reactions of his family and friends to the young man from Moscow. The reader is warned that the thought and manner of expression are naïve, and are intended for 'an audience nurtured in another culture, and both earlier and now only in fragile contact with trends in the outside world'. Maybe this was not meant as an apology, but it sounds very much like one.

Yevtushenko needs no apologies. Nor does Soviet verse in general, for it is in the great tradition of Russian poetry and is only different from, and not inferior to, the European. Its characteristics are down-to-earth reality and poetic common sense. It is a most prosaic poetry, but in suiting the form to content it obeys the highest canon of artistic literature. No decoration, sophistication or complication—these are not the Russian genius, which is nearer the Doric than Corinthian, and more like Langland and Chaucer than Keats and Shelley.

The translation satisfies the declared aims, and gives a true and compelling reproduction of the original. So well is it done that it would be churlish to pick out, as anyone may, tiny flaws here and there (mostly sacrifices to rhyme). Flaws exist also in the text, but this poem is big enough to ride out the little bumps, like a Siberian cart. Only at one place did I stick, when something American turned up in Siberia. 'The city park, the elevator, store' (line 18, page 17), which in the text is nearer to 'silo, or Corn Exchange', chemists, town park—all very modest. The translated line here is so loose that even in context it could suggest a great city park, a monster silo, and the universal stores.

The poem itself, like good wine, needs no bush. It is tastefully produced, in legible type, with parallel-page text—a boon to serious students. Useful footnotes clear up points of purely local significance. At 2.50 dollars, or about 18/-, the price may be thought rather high, but then so is the quality of production.

WALTER MAY.

CINEMA PANORAMA

Film World: A Guide to Cinema. Ivor Montagu. (Penguin, 327pp., 6/-.)

AT a motor show I saw a car suspended from the roof of the building. The body-work had been removed, and the car revolved slowly. Its transmission, chassis, engine, radiator—the whole make-up—were displayed directly to the spectator.

This direct portrayal, revealing the separate parts, came back to me when I read Ivor Montagu's *Film World*. The book, which has just been published by Penguins, is original. In appearance it looks like a popular history of the cinema. Here are the story of the invention of the camera, the story of the rise of sound films, the bases of cinema aesthetics, and an account of experiences in Hollywood.

The cinema is directly shown to the reader as it works; the outer casing has been removed from its complexity. The book is divided into four parts: 1, Film as science; 2, Film as art; 3, Film as commodity; 4, Film as a means of expression and transmission of ideas.

The scope of the material is such that the book might be called an encyclopædia. I have never myself read a publication on the cinema so full of instances and ideas. It is easy and interesting to read. The reason for the success can be understood if we recall author's life. Ivor Montagu does not speak of things unfamiliar to him, that one has to seek in museums and libraries, but from experience. He has been an editor, scenarist, director and film critic. He worked with Eisenstein in Hollywood and Hitchcock in England, and filmed in Spain during the civil war. He has been engaged in feature film production, documentaries and television.

The book is subtitled 'A Guide to Cinema'. It is good to travel accompanied by a such a guide. Montagu is splendidly acquainted not only with the land of film but with all its towns and dwelling places. He opens a multitude of gates and doors, conducts the reader to the most interesting places, pauses to recall what each looked like years ago. He himself has lived in each. The fullness of his knowledge and experience enables him to write without scientific dryness. Montagu often jokes. He puts ironic epigraphs at each chapter head, talks to the reader as a civilised, deeply thoughtful and much experienced human being.

Montagu knows not only the mechanics of a camera but the mechanics of war. He knows that the cinema can defend peace.

A significant place is given to the Soviet cinema. The author finds the bases of film art in the works of Kuleshov, Eisenstein and Pudovkin. Ivor Montagu is an old friend of our country, socially active, a recipient of the international Lenin prize 'for strengthening peace between the peoples'.

I consider that it would be good to trans-

late this book and publish it here. The reader would read it with pleasure and profit.

GRIGORY KOZINTSEV.
in *Issusstvo Kino*, 2, 1965.

WARTIME SEASCAPE

With the Red Fleet. The War Memoirs of the late Admiral Arseni Golovko. Trs. Peter Broomfield. (Putnam. 247pp., 30/-)

ALTHOUGH open to some criticism on grounds of subjectivity, this book is a valuable contribution to any objective study of the history of World War II. It cannot be lightly dismissed, as would seem to have been the intention of the British editor, Vice-Admiral Sir Aubrey Mansergh, editor of *The Naval Review*, when he wrote in his preface 'It does no harm to learn at first hand how these operations [in the Soviet Arctic] struck a Soviet commander on the spot'.

In the first place, the author, the late Admiral Arseni G. Golovko, was not just 'a Soviet commander on the spot'. He was the commander-in-chief of the Soviet Northern Fleet, and as one reads his 'war memoirs' one cannot fail to admire the good judgment of Stalin and his advisers in selecting him, in August 1940, to assume command in a theatre which, as Stalin remarked to him at the time, was destined to be of key importance in any major war. His selection for this vitally important post, at an age at which, as Vice-Admiral Mansergh notes, 'he would probably still have been a commander in any other navy', though due to his professional competence, would seem to have been due equally to his political competence. without which it would hardly have been possible for him to have written his story of 'triumph of high morale over material inadequacies and atrocious conditions'.

If in writing this story he lays himself open to the criticism made both of him and of Stalin, of being insufficiently concerned with 'the world-wide naval situation of the Allies', this may be explained by the well-nigh desperate situation with which he found himself confronted when Germany attacked his country—with a fleet far outnumbered and outclassed both in ships and in aircraft, and with an army which had apparently been ordered to blow up Murmansk and withdraw! The earlier part of the book, where is described how the Red Navy improvised a military detachment which showed the Red Army how to deal with Hitler's specially selected and specially trained Jaegers who were expecting to occupy Murmansk *within a matter of hours*, is most impressive to read.

Not less impressive, however, is the purely naval part of this story of the opening of hostilities, in which Admiral Golovko's bold bluffing proved completely successful; and of the ensuing 'long haul' to victory with which the Royal Navy became to credit-

ably involved. Here the author is sometimes critical—very sharply critical, indeed—of his allies, and although it may seem to Vice-Admiral Mansergh that 'every motive is misinterpreted; every "gift horse" is looked sourly in the mouth; behind every mis-carriage of allied plans is seen western duplicity', this is not surprising if one puts oneself in the Russian Admiral's position, and would sometimes seem to be justified. When, in February 1942, for instance, the German battleships *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* were allowed to sail out of Brest and right up the Channel, ineffectively molested on their way to Germany, there were many people here who thought that this had been 'arranged' by the British Admiralty, who were glad to see these potential commerce-raiders remove themselves farther from the Atlantic, as Admiral Golovko argues. It may or may not have been hoped that these ships would harass our Soviet ally at some subsequent stage of the war, for Vice-Admiral Mansergh himself writes that 'Russia and the West were never more than allies "in spite of themselves"', but Admiral Golovko was correct in his resentful estimation that they would turn up in his war theatre, where they eventually caused as much trouble to us as they did to the Soviet Union, and played a part in the tragedy of Convoy PQ 17, of which the Royal Navy was rightly ashamed, and for which the First Sea Lord responsible was mysteriously never called to account. The subsequent suspension of convoys to Murmansk, although temporary, just when, as Stalin pointed out, the Soviet Union particularly needed materials to cope with the strain of Stalingrad, combined with procrastination in relation to 'the Second Front' was understandably regarded a sinister by the author.

It was not only with 'difficult' allies, however, that Admiral Golovko had to cope. He had difficulties also with I. G. Papanin, the famous Arctic explorer, who, as head of the Northern Sea Route Administration, acted as though his remote part of the sea was outside the war, until the suspension of the Murmansk convoys released German raiders to appear in the Kara Sea; but this absurd situation was cleared up as the result of some surprisingly straight talking by the Admiral to Stalin, to whom it had been referred.

There are some ugly stories at the end of the book about delays by the British authorities in disarming Nazis, as the result of which they were able to murder thousands of Soviet prisoners of war after the termination of hostilities, and of Foreign Office pressure as the result of which British mines were laid in Soviet waters as late as April 22, 1945!

The book is well indexed and has a couple of useful maps. It is illustrated with some good wartime photographs.

EDGAR P. YOUNG.

NOT FULL MARKS

Soviet Education. Nigel Grant. (Pelican. 190pp., 3/6.)

THIS is a compact, factual and useful book by a Scot who understands Russian, has seen Soviet schools in action, talked to teachers and read their journals. He gives a clear and detailed picture of the general structure of education and of the working of the post-1958 reforms. These were intended to bring the schools nearer to life when the former ideal of the ten-year 'academic' school for all children was replaced by various possibilities of full-time polytechnical or specialised schooling, or of study combined with employment, after the completion of the compulsory eight-year school course.

He gives an up-to-date account of the school curriculum, year by year; of teacher training, university courses, and parent-teacher co-operation. He gives credit for 'good results with what most of our schools would regard as unpromising material', because of the comprehensive system and a school curriculum more realistic and relevant than ours. He approves of the greater stress on technology and science—one cannot envisage vacant student places in the science faculties of the USSR. He states in his conclusion: 'Among the issues in which Soviet experience can give us food for thought are the links between the school and other educative influences, such as the family and the youth organisations; the place of science and technology, vocational and technical education; part-time education, especially at higher levels; the attitude to streaming and selection in the school; and the place of women in education.'

He is struck by the generous financing of youth organisations; and as a Scot he accepts co-education as the natural thing.

The book is, however, flavoured throughout with the author's dislike of the Soviet system, so that he is always ready to pounce on an imperfection, and his recognition of achievements can appear grudging and negative.

For instance: 'Probably over 25 per cent leave school at fifteen over the USSR as a whole, though more of these take up continuation classes later on.' One *could* have put it the other way—that nationally 75 per cent continue their education after fifteen (in Moscow and Leningrad 85 per cent). He is obsessed by the 'rigidity' of the system—a system which since 1950 has experimented with polytechnisation, set up boarding schools of a new type, and given itself a complete overhaul!

He complains of formal old-fashioned teaching of the 'chalk and talk' type, but does mention the experimental schools and new methods in foreign language teaching, with an earlier start, smaller groups, and the use of oral and audio-visual techniques. He dwells on the 'aridity' of the compulsory

political economy courses at university level. He works out that teachers are very poorly paid, giving in the text an estimated average of eighty-five roubles a month. Yet in a note to this section it is stated that a secondary teacher receives about the same as a skilled industrial worker—100 to 150 roubles monthly.

I would certainly have said from my own contacts with Soviet teachers—admittedly mostly of several years' experience—that they seem comfortable and content with their income, able to live well and to travel widely. Mr. Gaunt does concede, however, that the teacher's prestige and social status are high.

The book contains a useful list of Russian educational terms. I do not quite understand why he finds the Russian word *srednii* confusing.

The bibliography consists mainly of official Soviet publications and of American works. Among the British educationists consulted he does mention Deana Levin, whose studies are based on greater first-hand knowledge than any other non-Soviet sources quoted.

Many interesting comparisons can be drawn by a parallel perusal of *The Official View on Education*, by John Lello, published by Pergamon Press at 12/6. This is a summary of the major educational reports in this country since 1944—including Robbins, Newsome and all the rest. One penny is spent on the youth services for every pound spent on education. It is recognised that 50 per cent of our children get no more than the minimum secondary modern schooling.

C. E. SIMMONDS.

SOVIET READER

We Read Russian. N. Fudel. (FLPH. 296pp., 7/6. Available from Collet's.)

THIS is an edition for English students of an earlier Soviet reader, some of whose texts are now familiar to readers of the *Bradda Kniga dlya chetniya*. There are only six sections. The first has the pompous title 'Work and Rest', but contains a number of very useful if not very exciting passages about schools, transport, shopping, family life games, etc. The second section, 'The Map of the Soviet Land', deals well enough with Moscow, Leningrad, the Urals, the Virgin Lands and so on; and the third, 'Nature and Technology', treats a number of elementary problems of science in a rather amateurish way. The fourth is by far the most original. It consists of eleven texts grouped under the vague heading 'Courage, Talent, Labour'; not all of these are interesting, but those which relate the activities of the explorers Sedov and Miklukho-Maklai and the scientists Lomonosov, Mendeleyev, Tsiolkovsky and Pavlov are well worth reading. The fifth section is half a dozen tales and legends; and the last section contains poems by Pushkin and Lermontov, and extracts

from Turgenev, Chekhov, Gorky, Paustovsky, Panova and others. Both these sections offer some very useful material, but there seems to be no clear principle of selection: the classical works are both familiar and important, but the Soviet writings are a peculiar assortment—some nasty bits of Gorky, some Kaverin and some Polevoy, but also a piece by Nagibin.

We Read Russian is intended as a reader for those who have completed an elementary course, e.g. Potapova. As such its texts are of about the right standard, and although some of the exercises are of little use and the vocabularies are by no means full it should be possible to learn a great deal from careful study of this book.

I must, however, end this review with a plea. It should be possible for the Russians

to produce readers far superior to any compiled by English editors, if only they would take the trouble to find out the things that English people want to know about the Soviet Union. We do not want a lot of *bor'ba za mir* and other flag-waving; we do not want curious English like 'flyer', 'workshop comrade' and 'a fresh newspaper'; and we do not want mock heroics from Polevoy. What we do want is more of the humanity of Pushkin or Chekhov.

Above all, why cannot we have a little humour in the texts on everyday life? In the passage *Univermag*, for instance, two friends who have been on the second floor arrive on the first and are told that what they want is downstairs, i.e. on their way out. How nice if they had had to go back to the second floor!

P. H. WADDINGTON.

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